

BYSTANDER EXPERIENCES WITH BIAS-BASED BULLYING IN HIGH SCHOOL

A Dissertation

by

AMANDA JOSLIN WILLIAMS

Submitted to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Chair of Committee,	Jamilia Blake
Committee Members,	Krystal Simmons
	George Cunningham
	Brandy Kelly-Pryor

Head of Department,	Victor Willson
---------------------	----------------

August 2016

Major Subject: School Psychology

Copyright 2016 Amanda Joslin Williams

ABSTRACT

Bullying in schools has significant negative implications for the academic, social, and emotional wellbeing of all students involved. Students who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB), or who are perceived to behave in gender non-conforming ways, are at greater risk of being bullied than their heterosexual or gender conforming peers. In an effort to reduce instances of general bullying in school, recent research has focused on altering the behavior of student bystanders to encourage them to take action in support of victims (e.g., get a teacher, etc.). Bystander potential behaviors include assisting or reinforcing the bully, remaining an outsider, or defending the victim. Despite empirical support for the influence bystander behavior can have during school bullying, information about bystander behavior during bias-based bullying remains limited. Using thematic narrative analysis, this research reviewed high school bystanders' experiences with bias-based bullying, their perceptions of bystander behavior in their school, and their social norms related to sexual orientation and gender identity. Results suggest bystanders experience four primary types of bias-based bullying. Additionally bystanders can enact a range of responses that are motivated by internal and external factors. Normative expectations for gender split into expected roles and dress, while sexual orientation assumptions are based on sexual behavior and gender non-conforming behaviors. Future directions for research and practice are included from the perspective of the researcher as well as the students involved.

DEDICATION

To my husband.

Without you, none of this would have been possible.

Thank you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to first thank my committee chair, Dr. Jamilia Blake, and my committee members, Dr. Krystal Cook Simmons, Dr. George Cunningham, and Dr. Brandy Kelly-Pryor, for their guidance and support throughout the course of this research and my time as a graduate student. Your mentorship was priceless and I am forever appreciative of the opportunity to challenge myself and learn under your direction.

A huge thank you to my loving and supportive husband, without whom none of this would have been possible. Thank you to my best friend Catharina, our dissertation working days kept me focused, and your friendship kept me motivated. I would also like to thank my baby brother, mother, father, and grandparents who stood by me with unwavering care and love throughout all of my many years of education. I did it, Grandma!

Thanks to the many Texas friends I have made, as well as the department faculty and staff for making Texas A&M University a wonderful home away from home. I am a proud Aggie for the rest of time! Thanks to the high schools, churches, and community organizations that allowed me to meet with their students and use their facilities for those meetings. Finally, a major thank you to the students who were so willing to share their experiences with me. This research was not possible without them, and I am truly humbled that I was allowed this opportunity to share their stories.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	vii
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	1
Definitions of Key Terms.....	3
CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW	5
Examination of Bystander Behavior	8
Bias-Based Bullying.....	14
Bystanders of Bias-based Bullying	23
Literature Gap and Evaluation Goals	30
CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY.....	33
Current Study	34
Positionality Statement.....	38
Analysis	41
Trustworthiness of Data	44
CHAPTER IV RESULTS	47
RQ1: Bystander Experiences with Bias-Based Bullying	49
RQ2: Bystander Behavior and Response Motivation	56
RQ3: Bystander Normative Expectations for Gender and Sexual Orientation	70
CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS	79
Limitations	82
Future Directions.....	83
REFERENCES	86

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW TEMPLATE 109

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1 Participant Demographics	35
Table 2 Participant Demographic Chart.....	48

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Although many students report experiencing bullying at school, youth who identify as a lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB), or those who are perceived to be gender non-conforming, are at greatest risk for being bullied (Fedewa & Ahn, 2011; Toomey, Card, & Casper, 2014). All students involved in bullying are at risk for adjustment difficulties (Gini & Pozzoli, 2009, 2013), but students experiencing bias-based bullying about their sexual orientation or gender identity are at an even greater risk for suicidal thoughts and attempts, as well as poorer social, mental, and physical health outcomes, compared to heterosexual peers who are also victimized (Burton, Marshal, Chisolm, Sucato, & Friedman, 2013; D'Augelli, 2005). When bullying situations occur, student behaviors fit into three categories of involvement: as either a bully, victim, or bystander (Salmivalli, Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist, Osterman, & Kaukiainen, 1996). In an effort to reduce bullying in schools, increased attention has focused on promoting bystanders to intervene on behalf of the victim (Salmivalli, Voeten, & Poskiparta, 2011).

Extensions of the Crick and Dodge (1996) Social-Information Processing model has been useful in understanding bystander behavior and cognitive processes during bullying situations (Blake, Hughes, Williams, & Stephenson, 2014). Through a combination of social learning and personal emotional regulation, this model describes the process youth traverse in an effort to adjust to aggressive situations (e.g., bullying). Bystanders that process through this model will ultimately enact behaviors that best compliments their previous experiences (e.g., perception of parental/peer expectation) as

well as the responses of the other bystanders present (e.g., standing up for the victim). Within general forms of bullying, the decision bystanders make about their response to bullying will influence the cessation or continuation of bullying, and will alter the outcomes for victims (Karna, Voeten, Poskiparta, & Salmivalli, 2010; Salmivalli, 2010). Although researchers have advanced understandings of bystander experiences with general bullying situations, consideration for bystander behavior during bias-based bullying remains limited. Consideration for various types of bullying could prove useful in further understanding bystander behavioral responses.

This is the first study identified about bias-based bullying using qualitative methods to analyze bystander's personal experiences with and perceptions of bias-based bullying. Scholars have applied qualitative methods to assess the experiences that victims of bias-based bullying have had (Varjas et al., 2006), as well as the experiences of bystanders during emergencies (Thornberg, 2007) and bullying (Thornberg & Knutsen, 2010). Despite these advances, I could not identify research examining the qualitative experiences of bystanders during bias-based bullying. Attention to potential differences in bystander behavior is paramount to further advancing bullying prevention efforts focused on bystander intervention. In this dissertation, I focus mainly on increasing empirical understanding related to bystander experiences with bias-based bullying at the high school level. Additionally, consideration is made for bystander normative understanding of sexual orientation and gender identity, as well as their perceptions of what motivates the behavior of their peers and themselves during bias-based bullying situations.

Definitions of Key Terms

In order to meet the goals of this research several key terms must be clearly defined. I define bullying as aggressive or hostile behavior that (a) intentionally causes harm, (b) is repeated over time, and (c) exploits or creates a power differential between the bully and victim (Olweus, 2013). Bystanders are all students who witness bullying situations (Salmivalli et al., 1996). The bystander group is further broken down into students who act as an “assistant” or helper of the bully, “reinforcer” or supporter of the bully, “defender” or supporter of the victim, and “outsider” or bystander (Salmivalli et al., 1996; Salmivalli, Lappalainen, & Lagerspetz, 1998). For the purposes of this research, the term bias-based bullying to encompass all forms of bullying directed at someone’s sexual orientation or gender identity. This is used to be succinct when describing the primary focus of this research. Although this term could include additional types of bullying, for the purposes of this research the term bias-based bullying will specifically capture bullying based on sexual orientation or gender diversity, just for the sake of clarity.

Sexual orientation consists of the feelings, attractions, identity, and sexually related behaviors towards persons of a different sex (heterosexual), identical sex (homosexual), or both sexes (bisexual; LeVay, 1993). Identity labels include gay (male-to-male attractions or general non-heterosexual identity), lesbian (female-to-female), heterosexual (male-to-female), and bisexual (attraction to both sexes; Savin-Williams, 2005a, among others). A related concept is gender identity, a socialized schema for differentiating group membership based on biological/physical sex characteristics and

socially constructed roles (Sherif, 1982). Transgender describes persons whose personal gender identity does not match the biological sex assigned at birth (Sexual Minority Research Assessment Team, 2009). The phrase sexual and gender minority youth describes all non-heterosexual identities (e.g., lesbian, gay, or bisexual) and identities that do not conform to traditional gender roles (e.g., transgender). Some research discussed here included only lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB) identities, while others also includes transgender (LGBT). Throughout my review of the literature, the acronyms LGB and LGBT will be based on the particular research described in order to accurately reflect the sample included in each individual study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to the 2014 Indicators of School Crime and Safety Report, 22% of students report directly experiencing bullying at school (Robers, Zhang, Morgan, & Musu-Gillette, 2015). Students directly involved in bullying situations as a bully or a victim face many negative outcomes. Meta-analysis evidence suggests that bullies and bully victims demonstrate lower emotional adjustment, and poorer peer relationships than non-bullied peers; with the bully-victim group evidencing the most difficulties (Gini & Pozzoli, 2009). Victims demonstrate greater psychosomatic difficulties than their non-bullied peers (e.g., stomach aches; Gini & Pozzoli, 2013). Self-report research with high school students suggests that victims and bullies have significantly greater levels of depressive symptoms, suicidal ideation, and previous suicide attempts than students who reported no direct involvement in bullying (Brunstein Klomek, Marrocco, Kleinman, Schonfeld, & Gould, 2007; Olweus, 2014). Other negative implications of bullying include poor school performance, increased physical aggression, and greater withdraw from school (Dijkstra, Lindenberg, & Veenstra, 2008; Paul & Cillessen, 2003).

In addition to the bullies and victims, multiple uninvolved students are often present during bullying situations (O'Connell, Peper, & Craig, 1999). These students, referred to as bystanders, assume different roles in bullying situations (i.e., assistants, reinforcers, defenders, and outsiders) that influence bullying in diverse ways (Salmivalli et al., 2011). Despite a lack of direct involvement in bullying perpetration, bystanders face negative repercussions that are comparable to victims and bullies. Thirty percent of

students identified as a bystander at school report substance use and mental health difficulties comparable to those students who self-identify as a bully or victim (Rivers, Poteat, Noret, & Ashurst, 2009). Bystanders also report feeling less safe while at school and are at an increased risk for elevated symptoms of anxiety and depression related to school (Gini, Pozzoli, Borghi, & Franzoni, 2008; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2013). The enactment of bullying behaviors alters the climate of schools as a whole and can have significant implications of student's feelings of safety and connection to school (Eliot, Cornell, Gregory, & Fan, 2010; Gendron, Williams, & Guerra, 2011).

Given the negative implications of bullying, research has considered variables that promote or reduce bullying behaviors. Specific personality characteristics, like social skills and social maladjustment, act as distinct individual characteristics that predict perpetration of bullying in school (Postigo, González, Mateu, & Montoya, 2012). Individual characteristics, such as likeability, can alter class-wide normative expectations resulting in greater acceptance of bullying behaviors when students who are highly liked act as bullies (Dijkstra et al., 2008). Other students, who often admire the likeable student, will report feeling peer pressure to conform and a need to belong increasing the use of bullying as a method to gain or maintain social power over peers (Burns, Maycock, Cross, & Brown, 2008).

In addition to individual factors, research has considered the social context of bullying. Researchers found that bullying occurs more often in classrooms that consist of students who act as assistants or reinforcers for the bullying behaviors (e.g., laughing

at the victim after the bully makes degrading comments; Karna et al., 2010). The social aspect of bullying suggests that altering student's normative expectations about bullying is a more effective way to reduce bullying in schools than considering only a bully or victim (Salmivalli, 1999). One method to alter classroom wide behaviors is to influence the bystanders, or the students who witness bullying situations, to intervene on behalf of the victim.

As mentioned, bullying situations extend beyond the traditional bully-victim dyad, with students taking on multiple distinct roles that can promote or impede the continuation of bullying behaviors (Salmivalli, 2010). Bystander roles (i.e., assistants, reinforcers, defenders, and outsiders) influence bullying in different ways. Bystanders classified as active defenders of the victim, those students that will befriend the victim, tell the bully to stop, or get additional help from an adult, directly reduce bullying incidences in classrooms (Salmivalli et al., 2011). Similarly, active defending, compared with passive ignoring, results in less negative outcomes for victims (Karna et al., 2010 & Salmivalli, 2010).

Actions taken by active defenders, compared with passive outsiders, often mitigate negative outcomes for victims by providing the victims with active social support (Karna et al., 2010). To the other extreme, bullying occurs more often in the classrooms with bystanders who reinforce the bullying (e.g., assistant or reinforcer) through laughing or helping with the bullying behaviors. These in-depth analyses provide further support for the important role bystanders have in reducing or supporting the continuation of bullying incidences. Knowing the importance of bystander

intervention during bullying warrants further consideration for factors that influence bystander behavior.

Examination of Bystander Behavior

Understanding how and why students assume bystander roles has important implications for explaining the persistence, desistance, and consequences of bullying in schools. Early research considering bystander responses to emergency and nonemergency situations found that multiple social factors alter bystander behavior (Latané & Darley, 1970). The way victims ask bystanders for help, the number of other bystanders present (diffusion of responsibility), and the bystander's perception of threat all significantly influenced how bystanders respond to situations. Recognizing variables that will influence bystanders' decision to intervene is also important for increasing understandings of bystander behavior.

Retrospective analyses of bystanders to bullying during middle and high school suggests that bystander behavior is heavily influenced by both personal (gender, aggressive tendency, perceived social norms, emotionality) and situational (type of bullying, friendships) variables (Barhight, Hubbard, & Hyde, 2013; Burns et al., 2008; Oh & Hazler, 2009; Trach, Hymel, Waterhouse, & Neale, 2010). A bystander's ability to recognize a victim's feelings (e.g., empathy) will often result in a physiological reaction to the situation (e.g., increased heartbeat) creating a potential to prompt bystanders to take action to stop the bully (e.g., get a teacher) in an effort to reduce the physiological feelings (e.g., decrease heart rate; Barhight et al., 2013). In addition to empathy, social self-efficacy acts as a key distinguishing trait between passive

bystanders and active defenders in that the more confident students feel about their ability to intervene, the more likely they will (Gini, Albiero, Benelli, & Altoe, 2008). Therefore, bystander perceptions of their social prowess as well as their ability to understand the victim's feelings alters how they choose to behave during bullying.

In addition to personal factors, situational factors, such as exposure to active bystanders, influence bystander response (Rock & Baird, 2011). Previous experiences, coupled with bystander's relationship to the person being victimized (e.g., close friend vs. distant acquaintance), alter bystander perception of and ultimate response to a bullying situation (Oh & Hazler, 2009). Adult behavior is another situational variable that influences bystander response to bullying. Bystanders with stronger attachments to teachers or parents (especially mothers) who model help seeking behaviors are more likely to report defending victims than students without that attachment (Nickerson, Mele, & Princiotta, 2008). Students who are told by their parents to not get involved in bullying are more likely to do nothing or even join the bullying (Banks, Blake, & Joslin, 2013). Researchers have identified multiple key variables related to bystander behavior; this research is often limited to retrospective recall of situations.

In an effort to consider factors that influence bystander behavior more directly, Rigby and Johnson (2006) examined bystander behavior by exposing students to video-based vignettes before questioning their responses to depicted situations. This study was unique in its use of an online cognitive processing technique of measurement as it essentially turned the student into a real-time potential bystander rather than relying on retrospective reporting. Prior experiences (e.g., personal bullying involvement) and

parent/peer opinions were two of the most influential variables impacting student behavior (Rigby & Johnson, 2006). Specifically, bystanders who had not been a bully before and who felt their parents or peers would want them to intervene when observing bullying, were more likely to report actively trying to stop the bully. More recent research suggests that the differences between bystanders who watch bullying but do not interfere (outsiders) and those who actively support the victim by trying to stop the bullying (defenders) is that defenders feel more efficacious about their ability to intervene (Pronk, Goossens, Olthof, De Mey, & Willemen, 2013).

Based on the above research, efforts to develop a more comprehensive understanding of bystander behavior would benefit from obtaining bystander perspectives about their experiences with bullying and factors that influence their willingness to intervene. One technique used to understand specific experiences that bystanders have had with bullying is qualitative methods. Thornberg (2007) found that bystander responses differ based on perception of danger, personal level of responsibility, reactions of others, personal feelings of time constraints (e.g., students in a rush to get to class are less likely to stop and help), and responsibility diffusion. Students who reported not helping victims in this study were more likely to minimize the impact the bullying had on the victim or report no knowledge of what occurred (Thornberg, 2007).

Thornberg and Knutsen (2010) developed a theoretical understanding of bystander behavioral attributions during bullying by utilizing grounded theory, a qualitative analytic strategy that develops theories about specific phenomenon's based

on the views of participants knowledgeable about the topic (Creswell, 2006). The authors found five main categories of behavior attributions that influenced bystanders, including blaming the bully, victim, peers, school environment, and human nature. Bystanders in this study were most likely to attribute bullying behavior to the bully, reducing their willingness to intervene because they (a) did not want to draw attention to themselves and (b) felt certain that someone else would help (Thornberg & Knutsen, 2010). Although these results have increased empirical knowledge pertaining to bystander experiences with general forms of bullying, bystander experiences with bias-based bullying remains largely unexplored. Before evaluating bystander experiences, it is imperative to recognize the theoretical explanations available for bystander behavioral responses.

Models of Bystander Behavior

In an effort to strengthen empirical conceptualization of behaviors bystanders enact during aggressive situations, some theoretical models exist that evaluate various experiences with dangerous situations. Latané and Darley (1970) developed a linear decision-making process adult bystanders complete prior to their decision to intervene, or not, in emergencies. Specifically they mentioned that bystanders must (a) notice the situation, (b) recognize the need for intervention, (c) assume personal responsibility, and (d) decide how they will intervene, all while evaluating if they have the necessary resources (e.g., skills) to intervene (Latané & Darley, 1970). According to the authors, this model explains why bystanders are slow to respond (e.g., the decision process takes

time) or why they might not respond to situations (e.g., fail to take personal responsibility).

Individual behavioral decisions are also influenced by their personal cognitive processing as described in Ajzen (1991, 2002) theory of planned behavior. Based on this theory, an individual's response to any situation will vary depending on their attitudes, normative beliefs, and their perceived control over the situation. Cognitive evaluations across these domains alter an individual's intention to respond to the situation, which then determines the behavior enacted (Ajzen, 2002). Both the theory of planned behavior and the linear decision-making process model explain variables influencing individual responses to observed situations.

Applying key elements of these models directly to child and adolescent bullying situations, Pozzoli and Gini (2012) developed a three level model of bystander behavior. Utilizing structural equation modeling, this model included the influence of individual bystander attitudes with perceived levels of personal responsibility. Attitudes and responsibility separately predict either approach (defending) or distancing (passive outside) behaviors exhibited by bystanders (Pozzoli & Gini, 2012). With a sample of over 2000 participants, the model fit well to explain the influence of individual attitudes and personal responsibility taking on active and passive defending behaviors. Furthermore, this research included consideration for the influence of external forces (such as peers and parents) on bystander responses. Results support that perceived pressure from parents and peers to respond a particular way to bullying has statistically significant influence on bystander behavior and warrants further consideration.

One model that evaluates individual responses to aggression, with consideration for external and internal influences, is the Social Information-Processing Model (SIP) developed in the early 1990's (Crick & Dodge, 1994, 1996; Dodge & Crick, 1990) and later updated to integrate emotional experiences (Lemerise & Arsenio, 2000). The integrated SIP model describes the cognitive and emotional processes youths experience in response aggression (e.g., bullying). Youths are equipped with a "database", developed through previous experiences as well as personal levels of emotional processing. The "database" and emotional processing influence youths throughout a cyclical pattern of response decisions when they encounter aggressive environmental situations.

To start, youths encoding cues and interpreting cues of the situation in an effort to evaluate details of the situation (e.g., the situation involves aggression, evaluation of the affect of others, etc.). Once youths have established that the situation is indeed an aggressive situation, they will evaluate their relationship to the situation and what behavioral responses are (or are not expected of them), based on the current situation, their emotional response, the response of others, etc. Youths will then enact a behavior before evaluating how peers behave in response to the bystander's behavior. This entire process then alters youths' database and emotional processes, influencing subsequent aggressive events that the youth might experience. Cognitive and emotional processing occurs outside conscious awareness, but has been shown to influence bystander behavior, nevertheless (Blake et al., 2014). The SIP model provides the conceptual

understanding of youth's cognitive and emotional processing of aggressive situations, and is this study's theoretical understanding of how youth process bullying situations.

Bias-Based Bullying

Bias-based bullying encompasses all bullying behaviors directed at actual or perceived sexual orientation and/or gender identity and expression of the target student. Youth who identify as a sexual minority or who are perceived to behave in gender non-conforming ways are more likely to be bullied and face more negative outcomes as a result of bullying, relative to their heterosexual peers (Fedewa & Ahn, 2011; O'Malley Olsen, Kann, Vivolo-Kantor, Kinchen, & McManus, 2014; Toomey et al., 2014). Consequences of bias-based bullying include increased suicidal attempts and greater rates of school drop-out that are often more common for sexual and gender minority youth than heterosexual peers experiencing general forms of bullying (Fedewa & Ahn, 2011). These bias-based bullying behaviors are most often verbal and related to actual or perceived sexual orientation (Rivers, 2011). In a school climate-survey conducted by the Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN), over 74% of the sample reported experiencing verbal harassment at school based on their sexual orientation and 55% for their gender expression (Kosciw, Greytak, Palmer, & Boesen, 2014). Thirty-six percent were physically harassed for their sexual orientation and 22% for their gender identity. In order to operationalize bias-based bullying further, it is important to understand the research relevant to the identity facets of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Sexual Orientation

Although scholarly consideration for sexual orientation has existed since the late nineteenth century, it has not been until recently that research has begun to consider sexual orientation as a demographic variable (Savin-Williams, 2005a). In a review of the most common measures of sexual orientation, Snell (1997) argued that measures of sexual orientation, which then ranged between exclusively heterosexual to exclusively homosexual, were not ideal. One recent definition of sexual orientation comes from LeVay (1993), who conceptualizes sexual orientation as the direction of feelings and sexually related behaviors towards persons of different sex (heterosexual), identical sex (homosexual), or both sexes (bisexual).

With this definition in mind, the best way to measure sexual orientation may be to take a multidimensional approach (Savin-Williams, 2001). Savin-Williams (2005a) defines three elements of sexual orientation to include in measures: sexual attraction, identity, and behaviors. Sexual attraction is an unconscious physiological desire for a particular gender or attribute, sexual identity is how people label their sexual orientation, and, finally, sexual behavior is the way people behave sexually. The prevalence of people who identify as a sexual minority will vary greatly depending on phrasing of questions related to sexual orientation.

In addition to the measurement challenges within sexual orientation research, theoretical models of sexual orientation identities have changed considerably over time to include principles of psychodynamic theory (Storms, 1980), biology (Bailey, Dunne, & Martin, 2000; Bailey & Zucker, 1995; Bem, 1996), and behavior (Mustanski, Chivers,

& Bailey, 2002; Peplau, Garnets, Spalding, Conley, & Veniegas, 1998; Peplau & Huppin, 2008). Key to all of these theories is the influence that gender specific behavior has on later development of an identity as a sexual minority. Additionally, linear developmental models have been used to establish stages of sexual orientation development (Cass, 1979; Troiden, 1988). These theories hypothesize that a linear model of sexual orientation development exists through areas such as, personal recognition, acceptance, and disclosure of same-sex attraction, behavior, and identity. Theories are limited to retrospectively recalled information from majority adult male samples. Despite sample limitations, these theoretical models provide foundational material relevant to understanding individual development of sexual orientation that has provided the basis for more recent research.

Based on these early theoretical frameworks of sexual orientation, an integrated understanding of the influence of personal, social, and environmental variables that promote or hinder healthy growth related to the development of sexual identities in adolescents, has been developed (D'Augelli, 1994). Reviews of this developmental process have detailed average ages in which children and adolescents recognize non-heterosexual attraction and identity (D'Augelli, 2005). Participants in this research indicated that same-sex feelings are recognized as early as age 10 or 11 (i.e., attractions), followed by self-labeling at about 15 or 16 (i.e., identity). Identification as lesbian, gay, or bisexual as an adolescent remain relatively stable throughout adulthood (Rosario, Schrimshaw, Hunter, & Braun, 2006). These results implicate early to late adolescent ages as key developmental periods for the establishment of a relatively stable identity

within sexual minority groups, but these conclusions are tenuous since much of this research is largely based on adult retrospective report.

A final, important concept to note within the development of an identity as a sexual minority is the concept of disclosure, or coming out. Coming out is a life-long process of disclosing sexual orientation internally and to others by revealing one's sexual attraction, identity, and/or behaviors (Gates, 2010). Due to the heterosexual expectations of larger society, coming out becomes a necessary process for sexual and gender minority youth if they want their identity to be visible within the community (Samuels, 2003). This process often happens differently across settings (e.g., home, work, or school), and people (e.g., family, coworkers, or friends), and will typically occur at different points throughout an individual's lifetime. As technology advances (e.g., online forums that allow anonymous interactions), it appears that the age adolescents are coming out to themselves and ultimately others is decreasing with new generations (Craig & McInroy, 2014), which is important considering that being out in high school has the potential to mitigate the negative effects of bullying (Russell, Toomey, Ryan, & Diaz, 2014). As students come out at increasingly younger ages, it becomes necessary for individuals who work with this age group to consider the implications of sexual orientation on student well-being.

Personal, developmental, and environmental factors all have some level of influence over sexual orientation. Those who identify as LGB typically follow a process that includes, personal recognition of same-sex attractions, self-labeling, and ultimately disclosing their personal identity to others. Considerations for sexual orientation is

lacking throughout social science research on adolescents (Sexual Minority Research Assessment Team, 2009), but is nevertheless a necessary identity to understand. Although important, sexual orientation is only one personal identity that is vital to consider in relation to bias-based bullying. Consideration for gender expression and identity are separate characteristics that also warrant attention (Diamond, 2002).

Gender Identity and Expression

An identity often associated with sexual orientation is gender expression. Gender expression consists of mannerisms, appearances, and activity participation culturally associated with a specific sex (i.e., male or female). Sherif (1982) defines gender as a socialized schema for differentiating group membership based on a combination of biological and physical sex characteristics as well as socially constructed roles and expectations. Gender identity is then the conscious acceptance of one sex as representative of the self and the socially constructed behavioral expectations that go with that sex that often change based on individual context (e.g., home, work, social settings, etc.; Ely, 1995). Evaluation of anonymous student ratings found that failure to adhere to the cultural expectations for gender expression were rated as unacceptable, regardless of sexual orientation (Horn, 2006). These results suggest that gender expression influences adolescent perceptions of peers as frequently as gender identity or sexual orientation.

Multiple disciplines have developed theories to understand gender. Early research argued that gender identity developed through in utero exposure to sex hormones (Imperato-McGinley, Peterson, Gautier, & Sturla, 1979). Results of a twin

study assessing the heritability of gender identity disorder, a disorder no longer used (via professional use of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, IV) suggests that the genetics of twins accounted for 62%, with non-shared environment accounting for only 38% (Coolidge, Thede, & Young, 2002).

Some scholars argue that biologically based models of gender identity are actually conceptualizing sex, and that gender is a related, but different variable. Unger (1979) posits that biological or chromosomal models categorize “sex”, while “gender” describes the non-physiological components and traits typically associated with biological sex. Additionally, Goldner (1991) argues that gender labels act only as a way to organize social behaviors, roles, and expectations into a manner easily understood within society. These critical relational theories of gender maintain that gender identity and expression are only important as a means to create order within society.

If gender is a societal level organizational structure, then it is important to understand how students learn about this method. One meta-analysis of the relationship between parent and child gender beliefs found small but significant positive effect sizes (Tenenbaum & Leaper, 2002). This suggests that there is a learned component to the development of expectations related to gender expression and identity. These studies suggest the relation between parental beliefs and gender identity formation warrants further consideration and argues for the application of social and developmental approaches to gender identity research.

Adding to the social learning aspect of gender research, Bussey and Bandura (1999) utilize a social cognitive perspective to understand the development of gender

identity. Their theory argues that biology creates the bodily structures that set the foundation for gender identity development to occur. Once the physical differences are cognitively recognized, children engage in behavioral observations of larger social networks, learning to adapt or reject gender specific behaviors based on societal expectations. As with traditional social cognitive theories of behavior, children are aware of their personal sexual characteristics (e.g., vagina, penis, etc.) in relation to various members of their social network (e.g., parents, teachers, peers, etc.; Bussey & Bandura, 1999). Children then develop one identity as personal to themselves through observations of the world around them.

Dissatisfied with only social elements of cognitive models being utilized, some scholars argued for the application of developmental and gender schema theories in an effort to more effectively capture developmental differences in gender identity development (Martin, Ruble, & Szkrybalo, 2002). This research contends that gender identity develops alongside other typical developmental domains through stages such as, recognition of gender (boy or girl), stability of gender (gender does not change), and finally consistency of gender (biology matches cultural representation). Similarly, gender schema theory argues that gender cognitions (thoughts about gender) are central to the development of a gender identity (Martin et al., 2002). Gender cognitions create gender schemas through interactions between children and their surroundings to form memories of normative behavioral expectations for each gender.

Tyson (1982) offers a developmentally based model established to understand gender identity. This model, based on the developmental stages of psychodynamic

theory, posits a 3-category system to define gender: core identity (or unconscious sense of belonging to one sex), role identity (or behavioral enactment of gender associated behaviors), and finally sexual partner selection (Tyson, 1982). Each psychodynamic stage of development (i.e., oral, anal, phallic, latency, and adolescence) has a unique new situation that children must resolve as they move on to the next stage of development. The situations include biological drives (e.g., arousal) as well as cultural expectations (e.g., connecting with same-sex parent) that interact as the child works to develop a gender identity through each stage. Tyson's (1982) model remains true to psychodynamic developmental theory with the inclusion of consideration for gender differences (e.g., boys face Oedipus complex; girls face penis envy), but the stages remain relatively stable for both genders, ultimately culminating in puberty when gender identity is solidified and sexual partner orientation is established.

With consideration for biological, social, and psychological influences on gender identity, Leaper (2013) reports that boys typically express a preference for self-assertion, dominance, and independence, while girls indicate preference for affiliation, coordination, and collaboration. These behavioral preferences receive reinforcement (or rejection) by social interactions with peers, parents, and teachers over time until they become a part of the psychological construct of individual gender identity (Leaper, 2013). Although socially appropriate variations within gender classifications exist (e.g., females wearing pants are accepted in some cultures), most developmental research suggests that children as young as three recognize gender specific differences in both concrete (e.g., toys or clothing) and abstract aspects of gender (e.g., strength

synonymous for male; Martin & Ruble, 2010). By the start of middle school, most youth develop a stable understanding of their personal gender category, increased affiliation with that category, and feel compelled to conform to the gender norms of that category (Egan & Perry, 2001).

Based on the strong feelings associated with gender specific group membership at young ages, it is important to know what impact conforming or non-conforming to gender expectation can have on individuals. Although conforming to gender stereotypes does not always mean there will be positive outcomes (Schmader, 2002), research suggests that conforming to gender expectations is preferred to behaving in gender non-conforming ways (Skidmore, Linsenmeier, & Bailey, 2006). Students who identify as gay or lesbian, who are also perceived to behave in gender non-conforming ways experience greater psychological distress compared to gender conforming gender minority youth (Skidmore et al., 2006). The impact of gender non-conformity is apparent in school bullying situations in that the less an individual is perceived to conform to their assumed gender the more likely they are to be victimized in school (O'Brien, 2011; Toomey et al., 2014).

Socially constructed gendered expectations often result in gender stereotypes, preference, or bias that can be harmful for individuals perceived not to adhere to those rigid expectations. Students perceived to behave in gender non-conforming ways are less safe in school than those peers that adhere to gender expectations (Toomey, McGuire, & Russell, 2012). Self-report and peer nominations of gender and bullying behavior suggests that students who behave in gender non-conforming ways, especially

females, are at an increased risk of experiencing both overt and relational forms of victimization in schools (Toomey et al., 2014). Consequences of strict gender expectations result not only in youth bullying but also physical assault (e.g., rape or assault) and active economic discrimination of adults (Lombardi, Wilchins, Priesing, & Malouf, 2002). On the other hand, students who strongly identify with their birth sex irrespective of sexual orientation or those who are insecure about their gender identity are more likely to attack other students when they openly behave in gender non-conforming ways (Pauletti, Cooper, & Perry, 2014). Attacks on gender non-conforming peers can develop into bias-based bullying as the behaviors continue over-time. Therefore, the empirical understanding of why these attacks occur need consideration.

Bystanders of Bias-based Bullying

Although limited, research currently available about bystander intervention during bias-based bullying supports that bystander behavior remains a promising avenue for reducing bullying directed at LGBT students (Espelage & Swearer Napolitano, 2008; Potter, Fountain, & Stapleton, 2012). Freis and Gurung (2013) utilized a group communication function in a popular social networking site to evaluate bystander reactions to bias-based bullying. They employed confederates to pretend to identify as gay and to act hatefully towards the confederate identifying as gay. Results suggested that high empathy and extroversion resulted in more direct bystander action against the bullying, but that positive attitudes towards homosexuality were also important (Freis & Gurung, 2013). They also found that the majority of participants did attempt some form of intervention, mostly indirect by changing the subject of discussion. The higher

numbers of bystander intervention noted in their study might be the result of the anonymity associated with online interactions and begs the question whether these findings would hold during face-to-face encounters of bias-based bullying.

In terms of adult bystanders, the majority of students targeted by bias-based bullying report not informing school staff for fear of inaction or that the situation would worsen because of negative adult reactions (Kosciw, Greytak, Bartkiewicz, Boesen, & Palmer, 2011). More than half of school staff surveyed reported regularly hearing biased language based on sexual orientation or gender, but did not correct this behavior (McCabe, Dragowski, & Robinson, 2013). To further understand adult perceptions of bias-based bullying, a grounded theory analysis was conducted with interviews of school and community mental health service providers (Mahan et al., 2006). Ultimately, beliefs held by school adults in relation to being a sexual minority seemed to have the greatest effect on whether or not they responded at all to instances of bias-based bullying (Mahan et al., 2006).

Additional interviews with adult bystanders suggest that they feel obliged to stop instances of bullying when a male is bullying a female student, but are less sure about their responsibility to intervene in bullying involving LGBT students (Anagnostopoulos, Buchanan, Pereira, & Lichty, 2008). Interviews with school and community leaders suggest typical school responses to bias-based bullying are to remove the LGBT student from the classroom/school (Varjas et al., 2004). These findings suggest that school policies and general climate towards LGBT rights often acts to hinder attempts to stop bias-based bullying.

An important step to understanding the bystander responses described above is to know how bystander's experience and perceive bias-based bullying. Using self-report methods, Wernick, Kulick, and Inglehart (2013) evaluated the influence teacher and peer responses to homophobic language had on bystander's intentions to intervene. Results indicated that witnessing the behavior of others (e.g., support the victim by telling the bullying to stop) had a small but significant impact on bystander intention to respond (Wernick et al., 2013). Another bystander study used video vignettes to measure perceptions of bully, victim, and bystander behavior during different types of bullying, including one scenario involving bias-based verbal bullying (Johnson et al., 2013). Results of this specific video found that a majority of the students were accepting of this behavior as "just a joke" even though other forms of bullying, not related to sexual orientation or gender, were deemed unacceptable. It seems that bystander perceptions of other bystanders, as well as the type of bullying witnessed, has a profound impact on determining if bullying will be interrupted.

Bias-based bullying occurs often in schools with little intervention by adults (McCabe et al., 2013). Bias-based bullying further alienates sexual and gender minority youth, resulting in more marked negative consequences for these students compared with their heterosexual peers (Birkett, Espelage, & Koenig, 2009; Ryan & Rivers, 2003). Available research suggests that students perceive bias-based bullying as less serious and beliefs about their peers and teacher's opinions influence their behavior. Teacher interviews provide additional insight into adult bystanders suggesting that they are uncertain about what their responsibility is during bias-based bullying. This ambiguity

about how bystanders should respond is often exacerbated by school climates that are hostile towards sexual and gender minority youth. Understanding how student bystanders perceived bias-based bullying is an important step towards the development of adequate intervention methods.

Potential Influence of Cultural Bias on Bystander Behavior

In order to understand bystander response to bias-based bullying it is necessary to consider the motivations that potentially underlie bystander behavior. Two key influences to consider are concepts known as homophobia and heteronormativity. Homophobia, an illogical and persistent dislike of homosexuality, is most often used to capture all instances of aggression directed toward sexual minorities that is based on sexual orientation or gender non-conformity (Fyfe, 1983). Some scholars posit that homophobia is used to ensure heterosexuality in youth and thus have labeled bullying directed at explicit or perceived sexual orientation as homophobic bullying (Rivers, 2011). Although homophobia adequately captures individual attitudinal bias against homosexuality, it fails to address the more pervasive cultural stigma against non-heterosexual behaviors and identities in our society (Herek, 1991; Hudson & Ricketts, 1980).

Research suggests that homophobia is often misused because it labels “fear” of homosexuality, as the only element of attitudinal distrust that fuels aggression, bias, and discrimination directed toward sexual minorities. However, these behaviors may not necessarily just be based in fear (Hudson & Ricketts, 1980). Empirical consideration for only individual biases of sexual stigma will ultimately miss underlying cultural

prejudices that are more damaging at a population level (Herek, 2000, 2009). For example, individual feelings of nervousness experienced in relation to homosexuality might cause some people to avoid situations that would expose them to sexual minorities. This is different from institutional or societal expectations for heterosexual behaviors that promote attacking non-conformist (e.g., using "gay panic defense" to justify heterosexual males attacking and/or killing homosexual males; Lee, 2008). It is necessary to attend more to the collective cultural bias that promotes individual actions made under the guise of fear for a complete understanding of bystander behavior during bias-based bullying.

Heteronormativity broadens consideration of bias-based bullying to a community level in that, it assumes heterosexual behaviors, feelings, and identifications are espoused by everyone in society and thus is the expected norm for sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression (Kitzinger, 2005). Expanding this idea to a societal level, Herek (1991, 2000, 2009) argues that societal sexual prejudice against homosexuality reflects long held cultural bias towards maintaining normative heterosexual standards of sexual behaviors and gender roles. Institutional biases enact sexual stigma within the larger cultural system, asserting heterosexuality as the normative and expected standard (i.e., heterosexism). Although homophobia continues to be used throughout research, there is a need to shift focus away from individual "irrational fear" and consider instead cultural levels of heteronormativity and sexual prejudice as the acting agent in bias-based bullying and, more globally, the marginalization of sexual minority individuals (Herek, 2000).

Varjas and colleagues (2008) identified four characteristics that promote bias-based bullying including, (a) homophobia or heterosexism, (b) acceptance of anti-gay pejoratives, (c) gender non-conformity, and (d) sexual minority invisibility (Varjas et al., 2008). The literature suggests that when a society exhibits homophobic or heteronormative beliefs any person who identifies as non-heterosexual is to be ostracized, often using accepted anti-gay pejoratives (e.g., calling a person “gay” as a way to belittle or demean them). Students are indoctrinated to these societal expectations and consequently form implicit biases about what gender expression should and should not entail (i.e., the foundation of homophobia and heteronormativity). This foundation then fuels student justification for exhibiting increasingly aggressive acts directed towards sexual and gender minority youth (i.e., bias-based bullying). Bystanders who also hold these beliefs are, therefore, more likely to also promote the bullying behavior in school.

Underlying both heteronormativity and sexual prejudice are implicit biases towards gender expression and sexual orientation (Cullen & Barnes-Holmes, 2008), which are unconscious negative social-cognitive patterns fostering the belief that one group of people is inferior to another (Dasgupta, Desteno, Williams, & Hunsinger, 2009 & Hunsinger, 2009; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). The key to implicit biases is that they are not consciously recognized within individuals expressing the bias, which can create some difficulty in attempts to alter biased behavior (Jolls & Sunstein, 2006). This means that individuals enact negative stereotyped expectations without conscious recognition of the bias (e.g., physically moving away from a person perceived to be gay; Mahaffey,

Bryan, & Hutchison, 2005). Development of implicit bias occurs during the formation of social groups that are often based on personal characteristics (such as race, ethnicity, gender, hair color, etc.), and become either socially desired (in-group) or socially pariah (out-group; Devine, 1989; Jolls & Sunstein, 2006). Behavior that is motivated by implicit biases result from the perceived group disparities. Formation of implicit bias risks altering behavior of in-group member to create adverse outcomes for members of “out-groups” (Banaji & Greenwald, 1995; Dasgupta, 2004; Jost et al., 2009), and can also alter the support provided by significant others (e.g., parents, teachers, etc.; Cunningham & Melton, 2014).

Within American culture, heterosexuality is seen as preferable over homosexuality, creating the opportunity for implicit biases about homosexuality to develop and potentially alter attitudes and behavior (Jellison, McConnell, & Gabriel, 2004). Results found that men who self-identify as heterosexual often report strong feelings about a need to appear masculine at all times by actively refuting anything that might make them appear homosexual (Jellison et al., 2004). Adult heterosexual males often have higher ratings of implicit bias against homosexuality compared to women, perhaps due to society socialization of male hegemony (Mahaffey et al., 2005). Implicit gender bias examined in a sample of college-aged students found implicit association of male names with positively rated characteristics (e.g., strong, leader) when provided with gender ambiguous vignettes (Banaji & Greenwald, 1995). Additional research proposes that a majority of college students expect non-heterosexual individuals will adhere to the gender expectation of their heterosexual counterparts with comparable

sexual attractions (e.g., a gay man would act like a heterosexual woman and a lesbian woman would act like a heterosexual man; Kate & Deaux, 1987). Finally, despite positive explicit ratings of opinions towards homosexuality or gender nonconformity, implicit biases against both surface consistently across adult informants (Steffens, 2005). All of this research suggests implicit bias promoting homophobia or heteronormativity have the potential to alter bystander behavior related to bias-based bullying.

In summary, homophobia and heteronormativity could both potentially influence bystander responses to bias-based bullying as it alters their perceptions of identification within the LGBT community. Underlying both heteronormativity and homophobia is the concept of implicit biases, which also has the potential to alter a bystander's response. Consideration needs to focus on understanding ways to reduce the occurrence of bias-based bullying in school. Recognizing what motivates behavior during bias-based bullying is an important piece to understanding bias-based bullying behavior.

Literature Gap and Evaluation Goals

Despite the depth of literature available about bystander behavior in general forms of bullying, there is limited consideration for bystander behavior during bias-based bullying. The purpose of this research is to expand empirical understandings of the experiences, expectations, and behavioral motivations of youth during bias-based bullying. This will add information, from actual student bystanders, allowing for the development of more accurate measurement tools to understand bystander experiences with and responses to bias-based bullying in schools.

This dissertation study will increase empirical understandings of specific situations that bystanders have faced with bias-based bullying. Additionally, I will consider high school student's normative perceptions of sexual orientation and gender identity, as well as their perceptions of variables that influence bystander behavior in light of normative beliefs about sexual orientation and gender identity. Analysis will focus on three questions. First, what experiences have adolescents had, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, with bullying in school directed at peers perceived to be sexual minorities or to behave in gender-nonconforming ways (RQ1)? Information pertinent to this question will clarify secondary student's experiences as bystanders to bias-based bullying.

Next, what factors do student bystanders feel influence their decisions to intervene on behalf of the victim (RQ2)? Allowing a bystander the opportunity to reflect on their awareness of variables that influence behavior will enhance future research attempts to measure bystander behavior. This information will facilitate the development of the future bystander measure by providing insight into possibly influential variables that research might not have considered yet (e.g., social relationship have been considered but it is possible there is more to bystander behavior that has not yet been investigated).

Finally, what are student's normative expectations for gender and sexual orientation (RQ3)? This question will provide specific information about what normative expectations of behavior that high school students hold regarding sexual orientation and gender expression. Knowing student's normative expectations and

beliefs will enable the creation of ecologically valid vignettes, to be developed, used to measure bystander social-cognitions about bias-based bullying, similar to previous bystander research (see Blake et al., 2014).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to develop an in-depth understanding of bystander perceptions of and experiences with bias-based bullying. Although previous research has reviewed the experiences LGB victims have had with bias-based bullying through qualitative thematic coding methods (e.g., identifying themes from participant narratives; Varjas et al., 2006), this is the first study identified to focus on student bystander experiences with bias-based bullying. Adult bystander experiences with bias-based bullying have been evaluated through grounded theory analysis, documenting adult perceptions of students experiences (Mahan et al., 2006). This study is unique, again, in that it focuses on high school student bystander experience as opposed to adults. Finally, qualitative methods have successfully provided greater insight into student bystander experiences, but only with non-specific emergency situations (Thornberg, 2007).

While previous research has advanced empirical knowledge of student and adult experiences with general and bias-based bullying, additional research was needed to understand student bystander experiences with bias-based bullying. By reviewing bias-based bullying with qualitative methods, clear definitions of bystander experiences, from their perspectives, is established. Development of accurate depictions of adolescent experiences will promote future endeavors to develop quantitative measures, increasing the ecological validity of future research. Application of qualitative methods in this research will be the first step of the primary investigator's efforts to develop an

empirically validated assessment of bystander social, cognitive, and emotional experiences with bias-based bullying.

Current Study

Participant Demographics

Fourteen high school students (ages 14 to 18) were recruited to complete individual interviews until qualitative isomorph, or information redundancy, was achieved (e.g., 12 to 15 students; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Participant demographic information (see Table 1) for age, grade, gender, and race were recorded using their chosen labels. I coded sexual orientation and bullying roles during wave 1 of coding, based on explicit statements from participants and the stories they shared about bullying. As a result, not all participant sexual orientation labels were obtained.

In terms of recruitment, six participants came from high school after school clubs, three from community organizations, and five via distribution of the community flyer or word of mouth. Seven participants called themselves female or girl, 6 male, and 1 participant specified that they were cisgender female. Eight participants reported being Hispanic/Latino, 5 White, and 1 Black. Grades were relatively equally distributed across high school levels with, 3 each in 9th, 11th, and 12th grade respectively, and 5 reporting to be in 10th grade. Similarly, ages were shared evenly with 2 participants each at ages 16, 17 and 18 respectively, and 4 each at ages 14 and 15 respectively. See table 1 for all participant demographic information.

Table 1 Participant Demographics

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Gender Identity	--	--
Male	6	43%
Female/Girl	7	50%
Cisgender Female	1	7 %
Grade	--	--
9 th grade	3	21%
10 th grade	5	36%
11 th grade	3	21%
12 th grade	3	21%
Age	--	--
14	4	29%
15	4	29%
16	2	14%
17	2	14%
18	2	14%
Race	--	--
White	5	36%
Black	1	7%
Hispanic/Latino	8	57%
Sexual Orientation	--	--
Straight	2	14%
Lesbian/Gay	1	7%
Not provided	11	79%
Bully Role	--	--
Bystander	6	43%
Bully	1	7%
Bystander/Victim	5	36%
Outsider	2	14%
Recruitment Location	--	--
School	6	43%
Community Group	3	21%
Flier	5	36%
Total	14	100%

Note. Student bullying role and sexual orientation were not explicitly reported. Both were coded based on student reports throughout the interview.

Most participants did not indicate their sexual orientation at any point throughout the interview (n = 11). Linda and Frank labeled themselves as straight, explicitly stating “I am straight”, and Ashley labeled herself a lesbian, specifically stating, “Well, I am a lesbian”. The majority of participants were coded as either a bystander (n = 6), as they talked explicitly about their observations of bullying, or a combination victim/bystander (n = 5), as they mentioned both times they were bullied and times they saw another student bullied. Shawn indicated that he had been a bully in the past, talking openly about a student he had bullied while he was in middle school, as well as times he had observed others bullied. Skyler and Frank indicated that they “never saw bullying”, but both talked about instances of bullying they had heard second hand from their friends or via social media.

Measure

Data were collected through narrative inquiry via individual interviews. Each student participated in 60-minute interviews designed to elicit detailed information about (a) their experiences witnessing bias-based bullying at school, (b) their normative perceptions of sexual orientation and gender behavior, and (c) factors they feel influence their and other bystander’s behavioral choices were examined. Thirteen of the interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim prior to analysis. Due to technical failure, one interview was not recorded. Instead, detailed notes were taken by the evaluator and the participant was asked to review the notes. See Appendix A for the interview template.

Procedures

The Texas A&M University (TAMU) Internal Review Board (IRB; IRB2013-0890F) as well as all research leaders required by data collection sites approved all research. Participation in the study was voluntary. Prior to data collection, active parental consent and student assent was obtained, and consenting procedures varied depending on the location participants were recruited.

At the high school after school programs, adult program sponsors were emailed about the possible participation of all students in their sponsored after school program, prior to contact with parents or students. From local community organizations, meetings were scheduled in advanced with the community leaders. Finally, parents of potential participants recruited via fliers were verbally consented over the phone prior to signing consent forms at the meeting scheduled with their child.

Youth recruited from the local high schools and community organizations were briefed about the study and provided with a packet of information containing a parent consent form, youth information sheet, a copy of the interview questions, a parent signature page, and a stamped envelope addressed to the primary evaluator. Per requirements from the research review committees, the primary investigator provided a copy of questions so that potential participants could review them beforehand. This was done to ensure they were comfortable with the study prior to seeking parental approval.

Once parent consent forms have been returned (or verbal consent received for community participants), a meeting with the student was scheduled at a time convenient to participants. Participants were asked to meet with I for about an hour to complete an

interview. Interview sessions took place at a location the student is most comfortable. Data collection took place outside of academic hours to avoid interference with instructional time. Participants were asked to provide an email address at the start of their first meeting so they could review a 1-page summary of the interview. Of those participants who provided an email address ($n = 11$), 5 responded to the review request. None who responded made any changes. Given the amount of time asked of students, participants received an incentive for participation (i.e., \$10 Amazon gift card). For accuracy, interviews were audio recorded, with participant permission, and then transcribed for coding (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002).

Positionality Statement

A byproduct of using narrative inquiry as a data collection method is that I becomes an integral part of the data collection and analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). By being a part of the data collection process, I must be aware of personal positions related to the study topic and recognize how that position could influence the data collected. Jones, Torres, and Arminio (2014) recommend that investigators make a concerted effort to reflect on their personal (i.e., identity and culture) and professional (i.e., training) positionality within the population and about the topic of interest.

This research is influenced by the theoretical frame work of Queer Theory (Jagose, 1996; Sullivan, 2003; Turner, 2000). Queer Theory is a diverse, umbrella term, for the efforts of various disciplines to articulate the process by which sexual identities manifest through the influence of multiple mediums (Sullivan, 2003). While queer theory focuses on the social construct of same-sex desires (Turner, 2000), its theoretical

predecessor, feminist theory, considers the specific implications of gender inequality on individual outcomes (Oleson, 2011). Ultimately, both theories speak to the significant, often negative, influence that the normative perceptions of society can potentially have on individual sexual orientation and gender identity. This interplay is best defined in the work of Butler (1990, 2004), who describes society as working to regulate sexual orientation and gender in ways that are often discriminatory towards some groups. An expectation within this research is that participants have received consistent exposure to heteronormative expectations of sexual orientation and gender. This exposure is assumed to create sexual orientation and gender norms to be measured.

Within both queer and feminist theory there is an understanding that sexual orientation and gender within many nations are heavily regulated by the dominant culture (Butler, 2004). Labels are externally placed on individuals, often prior to birth, that will erect extensive cultural boundaries, potentially altering individual agency (Butler, 1990). This study assumed labeling is true and that participants involved will have experienced the impact of this labeling to some degree. With the assumption of labeling comes the belief that the students will have developed personal beliefs about the social norms surrounding sexual orientation and gender identity. Based on the research presented earlier, I assume that those social norms will alter behavior exhibited during bias-based bullying.

In relation to the population specific to this research (i.e., high school students), I was an outside interviewer with limited previous contact with participants. Position as outsider is a consequence of the recruitment procedures available for this study. In

addition to my position as an outsider, I had to consider age differential power in my relationship with the research participants. It was important for me to acknowledge this age power and take necessary precautions to refrain from leading participants to answers because of possible perceived authority. My status as an outsider limited the power imbalance, but did not eliminate it. Despite outsider status and power considerations, I have multiple years of experience working with high school students within both undergraduate and graduate level training in psychology. This previous experience facilitated rapport building with participants to create a comfortable environment for them to share their experiences.

In addition to my position within the population of interest, it is important to consider my personal perspectives of the research at hand. Issues relating to the LGBT community are currently controversial within the culture of both global and United States politics. My personal position is one of active support for the needs of members of the LGBT community as an ally or active supporter. Similarly, my professional position related to work within the LGBT community is based on the guidelines developed by the American Psychological Association (2012) and the National Association of School Psychologists (2011). Both organizations encourage service providers to ensure that safe environments and necessary services are equally available, regardless of an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity. Given my personal and professional support of members of the LGBT community, precautions against eliciting inaccurate responses from participants were implemented. Specifically, the

utilization of semi-structured interviews were used to allow participants to speak freely while maintaining investigator impartiality to the topic of discussion.

Analysis

Thematic narrative analysis is an interdisciplinary tool that evaluates narratives for related themes in an effort to organize participant experiences (Chase, 2007). Narrative analysis allows for documentation of an individual's emotional and cognitive interpretation of situations as well as delineation of significant events from the participant's perspective in an effort to shed light on specific psychological and social realities (Crossley, 2007; Reissman, 2008). The narrative approach will assist in constructing a typology of bystanders' experiences through the reenacting of authentic events with I from participant's perspectives (Frank, 2002).

Although multiple qualitative techniques are available, thematic narrative analysis is ideal for the purposes of this research. Thematic narrative analysis focuses on developing an understanding of the phenomenology of lived experiences in an effort to develop an explicit typology (Josselson & Lieblich, 1999). Other qualitative methods, such as grounded theory, use a bottom-up approach to develop hypothesis by generalizing universal meanings (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Previous researchers have utilized grounded theory to understand perspectives of students and school staff (Mahan et al., 2006; Thornberg, 2007; Thornberg & Knutsen, 2010; Varjas et al., 2006). Although this method is beneficial for studies attempting to develop theories about participant experiences as a whole group, it does not allow for examinations of individual details within participant narratives (e.g., specific event details). For this

research, it is important to identify individual experiences in order to develop accurate vignettes for the development of future quantitative measures.

Another method of qualitative analysis commonly used is ethnographic methods, which allow for critical consideration for the influence of individual nuances within a particular cultural groups (Josselson & Lieblich, 1999). Ethnography research typically spans long periods of time (e.g., one year or more) and involve investigators working, and often living, with members of the population. Given time limitations, it will not be possible for the researcher to conduct this form of evaluation.

A final common analysis method for narrative inquiry is case study, which provides analysis based on specific characteristics of the individuals or locations of interest (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Focused concentration on specific participant characteristics is beneficial for providing an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon being studied. For this project, participants were recruited from multiple locations within the community, resulting in the inclusion of many different population characteristics. Diverse sampling across multiple recruitment locations renders case study methods as inappropriate for this research.

Ultimately, individual coding and analysis of the experiences told will be the ideal for this study's goal; namely, to examine individual experiences for the later development of realistic scenarios for the creation of a quantitative measure on bystander behavior to bias-based bullying. Use of thematic analysis research is supported across fields as a method to understand individual interpretations of human experiences in an effort to become more knowledgeable about present circumstances or

future intentions (Brody & Clark, 2014; Delgado, 1989). This methodological approach will allow for more in-depth considerations for how student bystanders are currently interpreting their experiences during bias-based bullying incidents, their normative beliefs regarding sexual orientation and gender identity, and their understandings of factors that influence bystander behavior.

Wave One Coding Procedures

Four waves of coding were conducted with each interview. The first step was I's general read through of the transcribed interviews. This was done in an effort to familiarize I with the interviews and begin to understand each participant's individual experiences (Crossley, 2007). During the initial reading of the interviews, member checks were coded throughout the interview as either positive or negative as described previously. Negative member checks were reviewed with participant responses and the corrected response was coded.

Wave Two Coding Procedures

In vivo coding methods followed I's initial codes. In vivo coding focuses on capturing the individual voice of each participant by utilizing their words to classify the data (Saldaña, 2013). Coding with participant's own words will facilitate the later development of realistic vignettes; the ultimate goal of this research.

Wave Three Coding Procedures

Holistic coding method was then used to create general themes within each participants' narrative developing basic categories (Dey, 1993). Holistic coding sets the groundwork for later, more in-depth analysis of narratives (Saldaña, 2013). Applying

this technique created units of data within each narrative that organized bystander's experiences in a clear manner for the next steps in coding.

Wave Four Coding Procedures

The final stage of data coding was pattern coding, which grouped participant's experiences into themes. This method acts to develop meta-codes by grouping earlier found themes (i.e., holistic codes) into content themes that fit together (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Wave three of coding will develop the larger themes within the participant experiences for the future development of quantitative measure vignettes. Pattern coding is ideal for thematic analysis because it creates the final themes to be explored (Saldaña, 2013).

Trustworthiness of Data

Throughout all of the described coding processes, the trustworthiness of data was assessed in different ways. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), there are four criterion for evaluating trustworthiness in qualitative data that need rigorous review to ensure the data accurately represents reality. Although exact terminology can vary, the core concepts of trustworthiness are based in ideals of accurate data collection and interpretation that are comparable to quantitative reviews of reliability and validity.

Truth Value

The first trustworthy check refers to the truth of the findings or "truth value" within the context the participants exist (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility is the qualitative evaluation of truth-value and is comparable to assessments of internal validity in quantitative evaluations (Krefting, 1991). Credibility was evaluated in this study via a

member check. Member check is a credibility evaluation that requires members of the target community to review information collected in an effort to ensure accuracy of representation (Krefting, 1991).

For this study, I continuously summarized her understanding of participant responses, and allowed them to correct her understanding as necessary. These summaries were coded within the interview and evaluated as positive member checks (I summarized accurately) or negative member checks (I summary was corrected). Additionally, participants were asked to provide I with an email address so they could review a one-page summary of the interview for accuracy.

Consistency

An evaluation of consistency assesses if the findings can be repeated with the same, or similar, contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The qualitative evaluation of consistency is termed dependability and is roughly equivalent to reliability analysis conducted in quantitative research (Krefting, 1991). This study utilized triangulation of coding methods (i.e., holistic, in vivo, and pattern) as a check for data dependability. The three wave coding system allowed for consistency checks across data methods.

Neutrality

Neutrality attempts to limit possible procedural bias such as inquirer prejudices and motivations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Requirements for neutrality are established through confirmability approaches in qualitative analysis and are comparable to objectivity evaluation in quantitative approaches (Krefting, 1991). This study utilized

triangulation of coding methods (i.e., holistic, in vivo, and pattern) to establish neutrality of the data.

Applicability

The final evaluation of trustworthiness refers to the ability to apply findings to other contexts (i.e., respondents, locations, etc; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In qualitative data, applicability is evaluated by transferability, which is comparable to external validity measures in quantitative approaches (Krefting, 1991). Evaluations of transferability require longer periods than will be feasible for this study. Therefore, a transferability evaluation is not possible due to limitations within this research (e.g., constraints of time and institutional limitations on data collection). Future research with bystander experiences with bias-based bullying should make an effort to include transferability evaluations.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The three primary goals of this research were to (a) document bystander experiences with bias-based bullying, (b) review bystander behavior responses/motivation to respond during bias-based bullying, and (c) highlight high school bystander's normative expectations for sexual orientation and gender. Utilizing three different coding techniques (in vivo, holistic, and pattern) major themes emerged from participant narratives about their experiences. The themes are explored in relation to the three key goals of the study.

In terms of RQ1, bystander experiences with bias-based bullying, major themes suggest that bias-based bullying in high school is most often (a) verbal, (b) social, (c) cyber, or (d) micro-aggressions. Related to RQ2, bystander behavioral responses to bias-based bullying, potential bystander behaviors included (a) passive avoidance, (b) victim support, or (c) joining the bullying. Also within RQ2, bystander motivations to respond to bias-based bullying, bystander motivations included (a) fear, (b) personal characteristics, (c) relationships, and (d) personal experiences.

Themes related to RQ3 of this study, bystander normative perceptions of gender, included expectations for individual (a) behaviors and (b) physical appearance for both boys and girls. Bystander normative perceptions of sexual orientation included eleven sexual orientation labels. Additionally, their normative perceptions of sexual orientation are based on (a) sexual/romantic behaviors and (b) level of gender conformity. The following section will provide in-depth explanations of the themes that emerged within each of the three research goals. Participant information can be found in Table 2.

Table 2 Participant Demographic Chart

Pseudonym	Age±	Grade±	Gender±	Ethnicity±	Sexual Orientation*	Bully Role*
<i>Ashley</i>	14	9	Girl	Hispanic	Lesbian	Victim/Bystander
<i>Shawn</i>	14	9	Male	White	--	Bully/Bystander
<i>Ginger</i>	15	10	C. female	Caucasian	--	Bystander
<i>Bethany</i>	17	11	Female	Caucasian	--	Bystander
<i>Linda</i>	14	9	Girl	White	Straight	Bystander
<i>Frank</i>	16	11	Male	Latino	Straight	Outsider
<i>Mark</i>	18	12	Male	Caucasian	--	Bystander
<i>Skyler</i>	15	10	Male	Caucasian	--	Outsider
<i>Cameron</i>	15	10	Female	Caucasian	--	Victim/ Bys.
<i>Lisa</i>	17	12	Female	Caucasian	--	Victim/ Bys.
<i>Brady</i>	15	10	Male	Hispanic	--	Bystander
<i>Trevor</i>	16	11	Male	Hispanic	--	Bystander
<i>Laura</i>	14	10	Female	Hispanic	--	Victim/ Bys.
<i>Melissa</i>	18	12	Female	Black	--	Victim/ Bys.

Note. Names created via random name generator. ± Denotes the participant provided the label in that category. * Denotes that the researcher developed that category based on in vivo coding. Categories marked with -- suggests that no category labels were developed because the information was not provided in the interview.

RQ1: Bystander Experiences with Bias-Based Bullying

Bystander experiences with bias-based bullying included a plethora of different situations, and participants discussed each in as much detail as they were comfortable disclosing. From the experiences shared, four larger categories of bias-based bullying behavior emerged. These categories include (a) verbal, (b) social, (c) cyber, and (d) micro-aggression, all of which receive in-depth consideration in the sections to follow.

Verbal Bullying

The most common forms of bullying discussed were verbal. Verbal bullying as a theme includes bullying situations where the primary method of bullying was through verbal mediums. Two specific subtypes fit within verbal bullying, namely, (a) derogatory language and (b) aggressive questioning. Although these bullying behaviors were slightly different, they both included verbal methods as the primary proxy for bullying.

Language. One form of verbal bullying was the purposeful use of derogatory language, either directly to the victim or within the immediate vicinity of the victimized student. The terms “fag” and “dyke” were often included in descriptions about bias-based bullying experiences. Cameron, 15, who had experienced significant bullying for her gender expression, mentioned that others in her school labeled her as a “dyke” on multiple occasions. Lisa, 17, explained, “You know it is using derogatory terms, like

saying gay but in a bad way. And, can I say the F word [fag]?” Lisa also had experienced personal victimization, and had seen her friends victimized on the bus by people who used these terms. Her hesitation to say the actual word demonstrated her discomfort with these terms. Ginger, a 15-year-old social justice advocate, openly expressed her disgust for the word ‘fag’ by articulating her hatred (i.e., “I hate that word!”) and then refusing to use the word again throughout the interview; instead pausing and tilting her head towards me while we interviewed if she were to say the term again in her stories.

Aggressive questioning. Another form of verbal bullying involved a bully aggressively questioning a victim about perceived sexual orientation or gender non-conformity. Examples of these questions included, “Why don’t you want to dress up [like a girl should]?” or “are you lesbian/gay?” Ashley, 14-year-old who identified herself as a lesbian, spoke of her personal victimization experience when she mentioned others have personally harassed her in this manner. One time in the hallway of Ashley’s high school, a group of girls approached her and asked, “Aren’t you a girl? Why are you dressing like a guy? Why is your hair so short?” Another participant, Ginger, the social justice advocate, said “[her] friend, he is not gay but he has a more feminine voice, people will ask, with all good intentions, what their sexual orientation is.” Both of these situations highlight how verbal questioning based on biased perceptions of a victim can constitute bullying behaviors in the eyes of victims and bystanders.

Verbal bullying summary. In short, verbal bullying was the most common type of bullying discussed. Included within this theme were instances of derogatory language

use (e.g., “fag” or “dyke”) or aggressively questioning a victim about their gender conformity or perceived sexual orientation. Stories that primarily focused on the use of explicit language or overt questioning about sexual orientation or gender were included within the verbal bullying theme.

Social

The next category of bullying behaviors fit within the theme of social bullying, and involved elements of hurting a victim by limiting their social capital. Two forms of social bullying mentioned included (a) exclusion or (b) spreading rumors. The first form of social bullying was *exclusion*, which is purposefully leaving someone out of social activities. A single individual, instructing others to exclude the victim, or a group as a whole can be responsible for perpetrating exclusion. Brady, 15-year-old self-proclaimed gamer who feels he can make friends with anyone, recalled once watching a kid in his school who was “a little weird or I guess awkward” try to join with a group of students socializing in the hallway. The group pushed the “awkward student” away, telling him to leave and calling him names. Brady felt that this occurred because the awkward student tended to dress less masculine than the other boys did, and was perceived as “not a man.” This experience demonstrates bullying behaviors of purposefully excluding a victim from socializing.

Another form of exclusion was described as refusing to allow a student to use common areas in the school (e.g., locker rooms, restrooms). Laura, the honor student, specifically named students excluded from bathrooms or locker rooms explicitly for their perceived sexual orientation. She also mentioned times she heard about people excluded

for their gender identity, but she had not personally seen this. She stated that “[the bullies] don’t want [the victim] in their bathrooms because [the victim] obviously like[s] other men. They think [the victim] will like, I don’t know, look at them, or something.” This suggests some individuals might purposefully exclude another individual from locations in the school because of expressed dislike or discomfort at the victims perceived or actual sexual orientation/gender identity.

The final form of social bullying was *spreading rumors* covertly, or “behind the back” of a victim. Frank, 16-year-old self-proclaimed nerd, reflected on his experience with bullying as “people talking behind other people’s backs. [The bully] will start telling everyone else [the victim’s sexual orientation], and they be saying stuff, like, you know saying they are gay.” This form of “outing,” disclosing actual or perceived sexual orientation, is sometimes done accurately (i.e., the student does openly identify as gay) or inaccurately (i.e., the student does not openly identify as gay). There were also times when a victim was out to one or more people at the school, and one of those people betrayed the victim’s trust, instigating bullying situations on said victim. This was true for Bethany, 17-year-old “theatre geek” who just moved from out of state. She recalled a time in gym class, at her old school, where a female student “spread rumors about her cousin being lesbian.” Although the rumors were technically true, Bethany reported that her friend was highly distressed at her cousin sharing this private information with the school. These experiences capture the idea of utilizing rumors as a mean to harm another individual and strengthen the social capital of the bully, at the expense of the victim.

In summary, social forms of bias-based bullying experienced by these high school student captures purposeful efforts to refuse a student's access to something/someone or spreading rumors. This form of bullying is distinct because it is mainly the act of intentionally ostracizing another student. Ostracizing via exclusion or rumors aims to be a catalyst to strengthen a bully's social capital at the expense of the victim's well-being.

Cyber

Cyber bullying, or online harassment, was the third bullying theme shared in bystander stories. Cyber bullying occurs frequently both inside and outside the school grounds via cell phones and popular social media sites. Ginger, social justice advocate, talked about her gender non-conforming friend who experiences cyber bullying regularly.

“People messaging them online, or commenting on their pictures. Just ripping them apart. They say things like ‘you’re gay’; ‘you’re a faggot’; ‘God hates you’; Stuff like that, and it is just horrible.”

Although cyber bullying can also include elements of verbal bullying described above (e.g., derogatory language use), it is distinct in that it occurs via electronic means of communication (i.e., text, email, social media, etc.). This form of bullying tends to be more pervasive because it is all but impossible to escape due to the technology-fueled era in which we currently live. Cameron, soft-spoken student who had been victimized, described in her experience, cyber bullying related to sexual orientation or gender appears to be more intense than face-to-face. She mentioned people at her school had

posted things like “look at this ugly dyke” or “this girl slept with so many guys”, and at one point “posting nude pictures of one girl.”

Overall, cyber bullying encompasses all aggressive acts perpetrated on the computer that are aimed at intentionally causing pain to another. Based on these bystander accounts, cyber bullying is a significant problem facing high school students today. High levels of anonymity and the uncertainty of who should be responsible for intervening (e.g., school or parents) create a dangerous potential for student victimization to go unchecked.

Micro-aggressions

A final form of bullying described by participants suggests a category of behaviors known as micro-aggressions. This consists of indirect, potentially hurtful behaviors, including, using incorrect pronouns or talking openly about negative personal feelings towards non-heterosexual orientations or gender non-conforming behaviors. Although micro-aggressions also include elements of verbal bullying behaviors, they are distinct because they are often less direct and could be potentially perceived as “accidents,” “jokes,” or potential “slip-of-the-tongue” remarks. Bethany, who had just moved from out of state, talked about a teacher at her new school who is currently “refuse[ing] to use the correct pronouns [for her friend, a transgender student].” According to Bethany, she had encouraged the friend to tell the teacher, but they did not out of fear the teacher might be homophobic.

In terms of student behavior, Ginger, the social justice advocate, described how a bully will “outright talk about their opinion and dislike and why they think ‘those kind of

people' [gay people] are going to hell.” Lisa, the college bound senior, mentioned she had heard a bully “say insulting things, not directly to someone, but they say something, and someone around gets hurt by [the bullies] negative feelings [about sexual orientation].” These instances of potentially inadvertent bullying behavior create similar feelings of sadness or hurt as those directly experiencing bullying. Although micro-aggressions fail to capture the bullying definition of being purposeful, they resulted in the creation of hostile environments where students do not feel they are welcome based on their personal identity. As a result, participants here included these behaviors as meeting their perceived definition of bullying experiences.

In short, bystanders in this study included instances of micro-aggressions as a type of bias-based bullying they experienced in school. Behaviors included refusal to use correct pronouns and openly discussing hatred or disdain for the LGBT community. Although not traditionally considered bullying by the common bullying definition, students felt that these behaviors should be considered bullying as evidenced by their sharing them during interviews.

Bias-Based Bullying Summary

Taken as a whole, bystander experiences with bias-based bullying differs. In general, however, bias-based bullying occurs in a number of ways including (a) verbal, (b) social, (c) cyber, and (d) micro-aggressions. With a more specific understanding of how bullying manifests in high school, it is now important to move onto how a bystander might respond to that bullying and why. The next section will review goal B of this study, aiming to explain how bystanders act and why.

RQ2: Bystander Behavior and Response Motivation

The next goal of this study was to review the bystander behaviors and motivations. Discussions about student bystanders split into two categories: (a) their potential behavioral responses and (b) response motivations. Regardless if participants spoke about their personal responses or the responses of other bystanders, all potential bystander responses were included.

Potential Behavioral Responses

Potential behaviors a bystander could enact ranged from active participation to inactive avoidance. Participants described bystander behavior as either (a) passive avoidance, (b) victim support, or (c) joining the bully. Each theme receives further elaboration below.

Passive avoidance. The primary bystander response discussed was passive observation or walking away from the bullying. Bystanders across stories were often described as passive and silent when they witnessed bullying, potentially watching but frequently walking away. Cameron, soft-spoken female who had been bullied, described bystanders as passive in that they “kind of just ignore [the bullying]. They don’t really do anything.” Her personal victimization experience left her feeling bystanders do not involve themselves in bullying situations.

Similar to Cameron’s experience, when asked how people observing bullying behaved, Skyler, a 15-year-old who had never experienced bullying first-hand (i.e., outsider role), felt it was extremely obvious that a bystander would be passive. Having heard the term bystander from the interviewer during her IRB approved introduction

speech, when asked how people witnessing bullying behaved he stated, “part of the use of the word bystander is, well, that word is used because usually people don’t do anything.” To him, the label itself conjures the expectation of passive observance, so much so that any witness labeled a bystander would literally “stand by” and “not actually pursue anything to make them stop.”

Ashely, who spoke frequently of her personal victimization, agreed that bystanders are passive, but added they would at least think about the bullying. She said bystanders “just look at the bullying, wondering about, ‘what is going on’, like observing and not even getting into it. Just wondering what is going on, I guess.” In her experience, a bystander is passive, but fully aware of what is going on. This is contrary to her later statements that bystanders are clueless, but captures the thematic narrative that a common bystander behavior is to remain passive observers of the bias-based bullying.

In summary, a primary bystander response to bullying is to remain passive, observing the situation or walking away. Behaviors are described as passive when they involved a bystander remaining uninvolved in bullying either directly or indirectly. When a bystander watches, walks away, or does not even notice the bullying, they are considered to be within the passive avoidance theme of bystander behavioral responses.

Victim support. The next most common bystander response was to take actions that support the victim. Behaviors classified under victim support included (a) demanding a bully stop, (b) verbally praising or supporting the victim, (c) calming the victim directly, or (d) educating other bystanders.

The most common victim support response was actively defending the victim by *demanding a bully stop* their behavior. This included instances of “telling a bully off” directly to the bully’s face. Trevor, 16-year-old who prefers to focus on his future military career rather than high school, mentioned he observed bystanders telling “the bully to stop what they were doing.” He stated that whenever he saw bias-based bullying happen, a third person would step in and tell the bully to stop their behavior. This form of victim support involves direct confrontation of the bully by telling them to stop their behavior. By intervening in this manner, a bystander is supporting the victim by directly attempting to reduce the bias-based bullying behavior.

In addition to confronting the bully by telling them to stop, a bystander might confront the bully by *verbally supporting the victim*. Ashley, a female who was personally victimized, shared how she once stood up for her bullied friend by telling a bully it “doesn’t matter how [her friend] dresses... it is not okay to tease him about what he wears... [her friend] is just fine the way he is.” She said this to the bully in response to his making comments about her friend’s slightly feminine attire. In this instance, although she directly confronted the bully, she did not make statements such as “stop.” Instead, she supported the victim by making direct statements of defense (i.e., “it doesn’t matter how he dresses”, “he is just fine the way he is”) in an effort to reduce the bullying behavior. Although bystanders here directly address the bully, they are doing so by praising the victim as opposed to punishing the bully with demands to stop, thus suggesting a separate subtheme.

Another way a bystander supports the victim is to *calm the victim or even calm themselves as bystanders*. Victims or bystanders who respond directly to bullying risk negative repercussions at the hands of the school zero tolerance policy. Ashley, 14-year-old who spoke of her personal victimization, said “[bystanders] have to stay calm, try not to go off on the bully [or you get in trouble]... also calm [the victim] down.” She talked about this in relation to an instance where she calmed her friends, but also when she, as a bystander, had to be calmed by the victim. To this same effect, some bystanders have been observed actively comforting victims as a means to calm their emotions. Ginger, 15, and Linda, 14, told their victimized friends to “just be yourself, even if people can’t accept it” and “it is okay, just ignore them.” For these two, they comforted the victim after bullying occurred, in an effort to promote the victim’s self-esteem. These stories demonstrated active bystander efforts to reduce bullying by providing support directly towards the victim, as opposed to the bully, setting it apart as its own subtheme within victim support.

A final way bystanders were supportive of a victim was to wait until after bullying situations were over and *educate other bystanders* who might have unknowingly joined the bullying. Linda, 14-year-old musician who loves all things creative, shared a time when she saw a student jokingly labeled as “confused” because they were questioning their sexual orientation. According to her experience, only a few people knew the victim was questioning their own sexual orientation, the bully included. Whenever this student failed to answer a question in class, the bully would laugh and say the student was “confused”, prompting the class to laugh and join in. Bethany

mentioned that during one of these instances, her friend joined the bullying because she thought it was a joke about the victim being confused about the classwork. Once Linda told her friend the true meaning of the bullying, however, the friend and several other bystanders stopped joining in the situation. This third subtheme of educating bystanders acts as an indirect way to support the victim. Although no direct confrontation of the bully or support of the victim occurred, bystanders stopped laughing once educated about the true meaning behind the comments.

In summary, supporting a victim is another potential bystander response to bias-based bullying. Victim support is demonstrated through behaviors that include (a) demanding a bully stop, (b) verbally praising the victim, (c) calming the victim, and (d) educating other bystanders. These behaviors consist of active attempts to reduce bullying via supporting the victim in a direct, confrontational manner, or an indirect, non-confrontational, manner.

Support bullying. The final bystander response described were behaviors that promoted the actions of the bully and encouraged the continued use of bullying behaviors. These behaviors include (a) laughing or joining, (b) questioning the victim, or (c) video recording.

The first way bullying is supported is through bystanders *laughing or joining into bullying* with their own negative comments about the victim. Laura, who had been personally victimized, described, “[the bystander] would join in with the situation to try to make the person being bullied feel even more belittled.” In her experiences, bystanders joined into situations of bias-based bullying more often than when she had

seen other types of bullying, because where she lives has a bias against sexual orientation or gender diverse individuals. Her stories suggest that a bystander would laugh or add to the observed bullying all in an effort to continue the bullying behaviors, thus supporting the continuation of bullying behaviors.

In a different situation, Bethany, the theatre geek, observed bystanders waiting until after the bully left to *question the victim*. She stated “people would come ask about [the victim’s sexual orientation] after [the bully] left. Like seeing if what [the bully] was saying is true or not.” Although less direct than openly laughing or adding to the bullying with the bully present, this behavior added to the victim’s feeling of discomfort and embarrassment. This meant that even after a bully was gone, bystander’s questions exacerbated the negative experience victims have, further perpetuating the bullying behavior.

A final way that bystanders exacerbated the bullying was when through *video recordings* of the bullying situations using their phones. Melissa, 18-year-old scholar and socialite, cited specific photos and videos posted to popular internet social media sites (e.g., Instagram; YouTube; etc.). While recording, Melissa said bystanders laugh and then later show their friends later. These same bystanders, according to Melissa, will refuse to talk to administration about the observed bullying if later confronted. Video recording the bullying captures the event more permanently and serves to further the negative experiences of victims. Additionally, students refusing to discuss their observations with administration reduces the likelihood of intervention or future prevention of bullying.

In short, bystanders can also support the continued perpetuation of bullying behaviors. They can do this by (a) laughing or joining, (b) questioning the victim, or (c) video recording. All of these behaviors act as a catalyst for bullying; creating an environment that accepts or even expects bullying behaviors as normative behavior at school.

Bystander response summary. Overall, bystander responses fit into three larger categories of (a) passive avoidance, (b) victim support, or (c) supporting bullying. Bystanders are able to support victims through (a) demanding a bully stop, (b) verbally praising or supporting the victim, (c) calming the victim, and (d) educating other bystanders. Likewise, they can promote bullying by remaining passive or by actively supporting the bullying behaviors through (a) laughing or joining, (b) questioning the victim, or (c) video recording. Across all behaviors, bystanders demonstrate a potential to alter bullying behaviors in their school by their action or inaction. With a stronger understanding of how a bystander might behave, the next step is to evaluate the motivations behind those behaviors.

Response Motivations

Bystander behavior motivations overlapped significantly across potential bystander response. To some, motivations fit as a reason to join or remain passive, whereas others felt the same reason was why a bystander would support a victim. As a result, motivations to bystander behavior are discussed in general themes below rather than being linked to specific potential responses. Motivation themes included (a) fear, (b) personal characteristics, (c) relationships, and (d) personal experience.

Fear. A primary theme about bystander motivation to respond to bullying was fear. Fear included (a) fear of peers, (b) desire for self-preservation, and (c) fear of school staff. First, bystanders *fear their peers will judge them* negatively or that they will feel embarrassed for adding their voice to a bias-based bullying situation. Bystanders fear the bully will turn the aggression onto a bystander who tries to intervene. Cameron, soft-spoken 15-year-old who had experienced severe victimization in school, stated, “[the bystanders] just don’t want to get involved. They don’t want to get made fun of too.” For her, there is a clear possibility that a bystander who takes action will face scrutiny from the bully, ultimately becoming a new victim. Furthermore, Frank, the nerd, “think[s] more bullying would be passed onto defendants when it’s bullying about gender identity than when they’re just bullying in general, you know.” He expressed multiple times that bias-based bullying tends to be more dangerous than other forms of bullying, which adds to the bystander’s fear of retribution. Although he did not specify why he felt bias-based bullying is more dangerous, these experiences support the theme that bystander fear will motivate potential responses to bias-based bullying.

With the idea of fear in mind, bystander responses are influenced by efforts *to protect themselves* from the bullying. Ginger, social justice advocate, felt “self-preservation has a lot to do with it” as a bystander does not want to deal with bullying situations themselves. By remaining passive, a bystander is not required to deal with the emotional impact of bullying. Additionally, Shawn, 14-year-old former bully, felt “it is social suicide to do anything” because the other people would not accept being told off.

He mentioned that bullying is a tool to gain social capital and should a bystander intervene they will lose any social credibility they have within the school. Frank, self-proclaimed nerd, best captured the idea of self-preservation by saying:

“[Being active bystander] requires personal sacrifice. And, I think, I think to stop bullying you would have to take some of [the bullying] onto yourself; you know taking that away from the victim onto yourself, which is really hard... Something that some would want to, you know, avoid.”

Frank felt bystanders must make personal sacrifices, which is incredibly challenging. Thoughts of this sacrifice is highly influential for any behavior a bystander will or will not enact during bullying situations. By remaining passive, or otherwise avoiding the situation, a bystander is actively preserving some element of themselves they find important. Whether that be social capital, emotional safety, or something else not mentioned in these stories.

In addition to fearing peers would respond poorly, bystanders are also *afraid the school adults will respond negatively* to any attempts to stop bullying. In terms of the school, zero tolerance policies for fighting or bullying sometimes result in student punishment even if it is a victim or bystander trying to stop the bullying situation. In terms of teachers, bystanders are afraid that they will either not believe the bystander or will respond negatively. Ashley, 14-year-old who has been personally victimized, said when she went to get help from a teacher about her friend’s bullying experience. According to Ashley, the teachers said, “We don’t know what to say to you”; she felt that “they just don’t know how to respond.” She said she felt very bad after talking to

the teacher, and wished later that she had never said anything. There is a fear from bystanders that adults will not believe them or will dismiss the situations, adding another layer of bystander fear about trying to stop bullying in their schools.

In short, bystander behavior can potentially be motivated by fear of negative outcomes. This can include a fear of (a) poor peer response, (b) a general drive of self-preservation against potential negative outcomes, and/or (c) poor school staff response. Fear is a distinct category as bystanders were specifically described as having worries for their personal well-being, which was driving their decisions to intervene or not.

Personal characteristics. Another common reason a bystander chooses a response is based on personal characteristics about themselves. This included examples where a bystander was believed to *not care* or *not know* about bullying situations. Linda, the musician, felt like most bystanders at her school just “didn’t realize that was bullying.” Linda’s stories mentioned that sometimes bystanders are unaware that a behavior is bullying so they “start joining in because they thought they were just telling [the victim] he was confused as if he didn’t know the right answer.” Stories like this suggested that a bystander might be well meaning, if they knew the bullying existed, but there was little way to determine if this was the case or if they were, in fact, apathetic. Laura, the honor student, felt that bystanders who were passive did notice but that they “go about their business because they are dealing with their own issues.” For Laura, the passive behavior suggests that bystanders are apathetic to others because of their own problems. Although it is unclear how to tell if a bystander is oblivious or apathetic, it is

clear across stories that some passive bystanders either do not care or do not know to get involved as an active bystander.

A final personal characteristic that motivates bystander behavior is ***general curiosity*** as to the accuracy of the bullying. Bethany, 17-year-old “theatre geek”, thought that bystanders “were just curious if what [the bully] was saying is true or not.” She talked about a friend from her old school whose cousin was spreading rumors that she was gay. Bystanders to this behavior then pummeled the victim with questions as to the accuracy of the statements. Their curiosity motivated them to question the reality spun by the bully’s actions. The bystanders expressed genuine curiosity towards the victim, wanting to know if what the bully said was true or not, particularly with the case of spreading rumors.

In summary, bystanders can also be influenced by personal characteristics. This can include feeling apathetic about bullying situations, being oblivious to social interactions taking place around them, or demonstrating just a general curiosity about the accuracy of a bully’s statements. The theme of personal characteristics captures the idea that a bystander can be motivated by individual processing of and responding to new situations. There is not necessarily a fear behind these decisions, just a general tendency to remain somewhat aloof or curious to the experiences of others.

Relationships. Another influence on bystander behavior is their relationships with other people. This can include their ***relationship status with the bully or victim*** as well as the ***influence of other relationships*** (e.g., parents, friends, etc.) on bystander’s normative behavior expectations. The primary influence mentioned within the theme of

relationships was a bystanders' relationship with either the victim or the bully. Shawn, 14, and Brady, 15, thought that a bystander might join if they were "helping their friend be a bully." Shawn, former bully, thought a bystander would only be active against a bully if the victim were their friend. In his experiences, a bystander who is not a friend with a victim has no reason to intervene. Linda, the musician, also felt like a bystander would not want to stop their friend from being bully as that had the potential to ruin the friendship. For these stories, bystander's relationship status was the primary motivator behind their behavior. Friends of the victim would help the victim, friends of the bully would help the bully, and those who were not friends with either would likely walk away.

Additionally, relationships with friends, parents, and teachers can also alter how bystanders think they should act. Lisa, 17-year-old college bound senior, indicated that she had lived across the United States as the daughter of a military family. In her experiences traveling, she felt that "combatting [bullying] is very hard in some places, especially in places like [state removed], because people here in [state removed] don't like gay people." Essentially, if the norms of the school/city/state/country you live is negative towards LGBT individuals, bystanders are likely not going to try to stop bias-based bullying. Ashley, self-identified lesbian, felt "if [a bystander] was raised to think you're a bad person [if you're gay] then they would join." Her personal experience as a self-identified lesbian has resulted in multiple instances of victimization, which, she feels, directly resulted from the normative beliefs about her identity held by her community. These normative beliefs can sometimes be a positive, as is the case of 18-

year-old socialite, Melissa, who felt that her school is labeled “the gay school” so “people don’t really bully gay people here since it is just normal.” Overall, however, stories shared overwhelmingly suggest that bystanders within communities espousing negative feelings towards the LGBT community are very unlikely to help reduce bullying.

In summary, bystander relationships to other people has the potential to influence their responses to bias-based bullying. This includes their direct relationships with either the victim or bully, as well as the indirect influence their personal relationships have on their normative behavior beliefs. Relationships is a separate theme as stories described the external influence of a bystander’s personal association with others as an influence on their behavior rather than internal factors captured in the themes of fear or personal characteristics.

Personal experiences. The final motivation behind bystander behavior was that of their personal experiences. Personal experiences included both their previous experiences with bullying and their education in general and about the LGBT community. *Previous bullying experience* also has the potential to alter a bystander’s motivation to respond in any way. If you have been victimized previously, there seems to be increased feelings of empathy or caring for the victim. Ashley, 14, and Lisa, 17, both indicated their personal decisions to defend victims was a direct result of their experiences being victimized. Both discussed openly about times they had been victimized and, as a result, both indicated feeling compelled to respond to bullying directly once in the bystander role. To the opposite extreme, individuals who may have

never experienced personal victimization or might have been a bully before would be less likely to help victims, preferring instead to join. Brady, 15-year-old self-proclaimed gamer, thought that a bystander would join or be passive if “they used to be a bully.” In all of these stories, a bystander’s previous experience with bullying situations would influence how they would respond to a current situation based on their experiences as either a bully or a victim.

Previous experiences include not only bullying experience but also a bystander’s *academic education*, and *their education about the LGBT community*. Frank, 16, and Ginger, 15, noted they were both taking multiple advanced placement classes, which resulted in their being surrounded by other students focused primarily on their education. As a result, they felt that bystanders stop the infrequent bullying that does happen almost immediately. They believed students with “higher education” are less likely to accept or perpetrate bullying behavior in their classrooms compared with students in general education. Additionally, Skyler, 15, felt that bystanders might just be uneducated about bias-based bullying or unexperienced with individuals who are a part of the LGBT community. He discussed that he has extensive personal relationships with members of the LGBT community. Because of these personal relationships, he felt if he saw bias-based bullying, he would be very motivated to intervene. He feels his education and experience with members of the community has increased his level of empathy and care for the community.

Based on the experiences shared here, bystanders personal experiences has the potential to alter the behavior they enact. Previous experiences with bullying, as a

victim or bully, can alter a current bystander's intervention method. Additionally, a bystander's education in general and specifically with issues related to the LGBT community has the potential to alter behavior. This theme is distinct in that it described external experiences bystanders have had, not related to their relationships with other people or by personal characteristics described in other themes.

Bystander motivations summary. Taken as a whole, bystander behavior is motivated by a number of internal and external factors including (1) fear, (2) personal characteristics, (3) relationships, and (4) personal experience. First, within the theme of fear, bystanders potentially worry about the responses of both their peers and school staff, and tend to have a high focus on self-preservation. Next, internal personal characteristics of feeling apathy, being oblivious, or just general curiosity can have an effect. Third, bystander relationships in general and their relationship with either the bully or victim can change their normative behavioral expectations for how to respond to bullying. Finally, bystander's personal experiences with bullying and their education, in general and about the LGBT community, will alter how they choose to respond to bullying. Overall, a combination of internal and external factors can have substantial influence over a bystander's motivation to behave during bullying situations.

RQ3: Bystander Normative Expectations for Gender and Sexual Orientation

The final goal of this study was to highlight the normative expectations students have for gender and sexual orientation. Gender identity themes included expectations for the (a) behaviors and (b) physical appearance for both boys and girls. Sexual orientation identity discussions included eleven sexual orientation labels and that sexual

orientation is defined by bystander perceptions of (a) sexual/romantic behaviors and (b) level of gender conformity.

Gender Norms

Due to the wording of questions, gender norms split into expectations for boys and expectations for girls. There were no explicit questions related to gender or sex labels other than boy/male and girl/female. Within each gender, participants discussed general expectations for (a) behaviors and (b) physical appearance. I observed that across all of my interviews participants appeared to be uncertain or hesitant about gender expectations for genders with which they did not identify (i.e., self-identified females stated they did not know what males were supposed to be like). Melissa, 18-year-old socialite, stated that she “had never really been told anything about guys.” Shawn, 14-year-old former bully, Mark, 18-year-old athlete, and Trevor, 16-year-old future military man, made statements like “I don’t know what they expect [for girls], but I have a sister” or “I’m not really sure” before they provided their thoughts about girl/female expectations. Despite this uncertainty, all participants discussed what they felt fit as behavior and appearance expectations for each gender.

Boys/Men. The primary term that developed across all male expectations was “tough.” Participants indicated that men are expected to be tough and to not show emotion. Shawn, 14-year-old former bully, mentioned, “The football team uses the terms rock or tough.” These words indicated that a high level of strength is expected for individuals who are born male. Shawn also described intense pressure for men to meet this “tough expectations” by stating that “[men] have to be physically, mentally, and

emotionally tough at all times.” Physically they are expected to be buff (i.e. have good muscle tone), have facial hair, and be tall. Frank, 16-year-old world traveler, used the word “Neanderthal” to describe male stereotypes. He did not elaborate on this, but typical expectations for a Neanderthal human species is significant body hair, larger heads, and hunched over body. It was also noted repeatedly that a male’s voice is important, significantly that they have a lower or deeper sounding voice. Voice tone is key to the male gender, as seen in discussions about gender related bullying (i.e., male sexual orientation is often questioned if their voice is high).

Dress for men is very strict with several articles of clothing being off limits for men in modern day American culture (e.g., dresses, skirts, blouses). Ginger, 15-year-old social justice advocate, noted, “A male has to be the opposite of a female. Regular jeans and a T-shirt, that’s perfectly normal, but because being feminine is so bad, a guy cannot wear girl’s clothes.” She indicated that, in her experience, a male is seen as lesser should he ever look or act in roles of a woman. About specific roles, men are more often accepted as leaders, compared with women. Despite this, Brady, 15-year-old friendly gamer, indicated, “the majority [of males] don’t tend to behave well, and are not great when it comes to school.” So despite acceptable leadership qualities, they are also assumed to behave badly. Brady added that boys are often known to cuss excessively at his school as a way to demonstrate power or dominance over others through intimidation. These behaviors often successfully result in developing leadership through intimidation or fear, a reportedly acceptable behavior for males.

Overall, noted experiences suggest that boys/men are supposed to be tough, strong, and stoic, while adhering to strict dress expectations that cannot include anything remotely related to girls/females. It is assumed that they will not perform well in school, and that they will behave in a way that is not encouraged by larger society. Despite these poor behavioral assumptions, boys/men are accepted more often as leaders, often using discouraged aggressive behaviors to elevate their individual status to leaders by means of intimidation.

Girls/Women. For female expectations, the terms used repeatedly were pink, perfect, and Barbie. Barbie reportedly captures the quintessential expectation for how a female should look. Ashley, 14-year-old self-identified lesbian, described “[females are] basically Barbie, you know? Perfect hair. Perfect make-up. Just, perfect.” Expectations are that a female will be more sympathetic towards others, dependent on others, docile, sensitive, whiney, nice, and subdued. They were often described as the cheerleaders of the school, as opposed to being leaders like the boys. For some, females are perceived to be the “weaker sex” as highlighted by Mark’s comments that he, “think[s] women are more easily taken advantage of [compared to men].” Several of his stories suggested that a female has to be extra careful to avoid victimization because they are easier targets compared with men.

In terms of physical appearance, Melissa, 18-year-old who spends most of her time with guys, said she has been told women “should have a big butt, big boobs, curves, long hair.” In general, there seems to be greater expectations for a female is that they will care about how they look and take careful steps to groom. There is an expectation

that females will maintain their appearance through grooming (e.g., painting their nails, getting their hair done) and through being physically fit, but not overly strong or buff like males. Frank, 16-year-old world traveler, expressed that females “are expected, unreasonably expected, to put in, you know, to spend a lot of time making sure that they look good and stuff.” In his experience, a female/girl who does not put forth this extra grooming effort risks victimization for that reason. When it comes to dress, females seem to experience less strict requirements compared with males. The primary example was that woman can acceptably wear pants as well as skirts/dresses, and they can wear their hair shorter (e.g., pixie cuts). For Linda, the 14-year-old musician, “when I think of a girl I think of dresses and long hair.” This suggests that despite having some more flexibility, there are still explicit expectations for what a girl/woman should look like.

In summary, girls are assumed to fit within stereotyped expectations related to the popular toy Barbie, perfection, and the color pink. There are expectations that girls will be more sympathetic and sensitive towards others, while maintaining more supportive roles in society rather than leadership positions. Although they have less strict rules about how to dress and wear their hair compared with men, there are still clear and explicit expectations for grooming and appearance.

Sexual Orientation

Discussion about sexual orientation norms centered on how you determine someone’s sexual orientation and on what labels participants used or knew. Label knowledge varied greatly, but participants ultimately named eleven sexual orientation labels in total. In terms of recognizing someone’s sexual orientation, the majority of

participants stated the other person would have to tell you their sexual orientation, but added you can assume sexual orientation through assumptions about (a) observed behavior, or (b) failure to adhere to gender norms or stereotypes. I noticed across interviews that some participants needed additional clarification about what I “meant by sexual orientation.” In response to this, I would often use the terms gay or straight and participants would report better understanding of the question. It is unclear why participants did not understand the term sexual orientation and no follow up about this uncertainty occurred during interviews due to the semi-structured nature of inquiry.

Labels. Every participant involved in this study discussed the sexual orientation labels “gay”, “lesbian”, and “bisexual”. Other labels (in order of frequency) included “pansexual”, “asexual”, “transsexual”, “demisexual”, “sapiosexual”, “queer”, “heterosexual or straight”, and “aromantic.” Most reported that they learned the labels “gay”, “lesbian”, and “bisexual” from their friends or family, and the rest via social media sites or specific clubs at schools (e.g., Gay Straight Alliance). An important note about labels is that one participant, namely Ginger the 15-year-old self-described social justice advocate, was the only participant to name the majority of the “other labels” (e.g., demisexual, sapiosexual, aromantic, and transsexual). She explicitly prided herself on being knowledgeable about the cultural differences for multiple groups of people based on religion, gender, and sexual orientation. She was somewhat of an anomaly to this study as her knowledge was more expansive than for other participants. Nevertheless, her additions to the labels was included in this study to demonstrate the wide range of knowledge levels potentially had by high school students today.

Behavioral assumptions. Although some discussions indicated it is not possible to tell someone's sexual orientation unless they explicitly tell you, some behavior characteristics were specified as means for make assumptions about sexual orientation. Sexual orientation guesses occur when someone is showing affection towards another person of the same or opposite gender/sex. Ginger, the social justice advocate, laughed as she explained, "[you know sexual orientation if] they're making out with someone? If they are showing romantic affection to someone the same sex or opposite sex then, well there you go." Linda, the musician, hesitantly stated, "I guess if you see them with another person, I guess you could assume things. Like, if you see a guy with another guy you might think they're gay." These experiences suggests a bystander can assume someone's sexual orientation, or at least one sex they find attractive, based on the apparent sex match or mismatch of individuals showing affection for each other.

Adherence to gender stereotypes. The other way participants indicated a bystander could determine sexual orientation was specific to an individual's lack of adherence to gender stereotypes. Frank, 18-year-old traveler, felt sexual orientation can be determined if "they obviously deviate, uhm, I think it goes back to those gender stereotypes." Again reiterating the importance of gender stereotype adherence. Shawn, the former bully, used the term "gay-dar" to classify the ability to recognize someone's sexual orientation based on his or her gender expression. He stated it is easy to determine sexual orientation if someone was not acting on the gender binary, although added that you probably should not do that.

To explain further, a male who might identify as gay would have a higher voice and behave in a more feminine manner. In Ashley's, the quiet introvert, experience, "[gay people] are supposed to be super girly, [and] have high pitched voices." She brought up the common stereotype of a super flamboyant man, who dressed nicely and waved his hands in feminine ways while he talked. Laura, the honor student, described the stereotypical gay male as being "sassier than the rest of us." Skyler, the outsider, said he had a gay friend who "likes to act super flamboyant, so people know that he is gay because of that." Melissa, 18-year-old who said she goes to the "gay high school", reiterated these points by saying people assume a man who has "a high pitched voice, or who they think dressed like girls" will be quickly labeled as gay, even if he is in a relationship with a female. To the opposite extreme of Skyler's friend, Melissa had one gay friend who presents himself as very masculine so, according to her, very few people even know that he is gay.

Likewise, but to a lesser extent, a female lesbian would appear more masculine in their dress and mannerisms. Lisa, 17, and Ashley, 14, both mentioned lesbians are "supposed to wear flannel and Timberlands." Ashley, self-identified as lesbian, said people have told her repeatedly to be manlier if she is truly a lesbian. Although gay and lesbian both had specific behavioral expectations, there were no specific expectations for labels not on the binary (e.g., pansexual, bisexual, etc.). Ginger, the social justice advocate, believes that these labels lack stereotypes because many people are "not educated" about labels other than gay or lesbian. Ginger, 15, and Bethany, 17, did note that some labels (e.g., lesbian and bisexual) are "over-sexualized" by the larger culture.

By this, Bethany meant, “people immediately assume if you’re bisexual or lesbian then you want to have threesomes with them.”

Sexual orientation summary. In summary, student knowledge varied significantly in relation to sexual orientation labels. Although they identified eleven labels, the majority of them came from one participant who prided herself on being a social justice advocate. Despite these discrepancies in knowledge, every participant cited gay, lesbian, and bisexual as labels they use or have heard used regularly. In terms of normative beliefs about how to recognize sexual orientation in others, the primary themes were (1) assumptions about observed behavior, or (2) failure to adhere to gender norms or stereotypes. Therefore, sexual orientation is most often assumed based on the gender match, or mismatch, of people displaying romantic or sexual attraction to each other or on an individual’s adherence to gender normative expectations (described in previous sections).

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

Findings from this study are the first identified within the literature to expand empirical understanding of high school bystander's experience with bias-based bullying, from their perspective and across three domains. I reviewed personal bystander accounts of bias-based bullying situations that have happened in local high school settings; second, I illuminated real world bystander responses and the motivations behind the responses of bystanders to bias-based bullying; and finally, I documented the perceived gender and sexual orientation normative standards held by high school students. In doing so, I expand empirical understanding of the qualitative experiences high school students across the southern United States have with bias-based bullying, and their perception of sexual orientation and gender identity stereotypes.

In line with previous bullying research, the primary methods bias-based bullying is perpetrated, was through verbal, social, or cyber means (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2007; Evans & Chapman, 2014; Gladden, Vivolo-Kantor, Hamburger, & Lumpkin, 2014). Contrary to previous research, bystanders in this study also included instances of micro-aggressions under the umbrella of bullying behaviors. Given the typical method of defining bullying used in research (Olweus, 1993), micro-aggressions likely do not fit empirical criteria for school bullying behavior. Research specific to LGBT related micro-aggressions describe behaviors and negative outcomes can appear comparable to bullying situations (Nadal, 2013; Nadal & Griffin, 2011; Nadal et al., 2011). The current results suggest that micro-aggression have the potential to set the

foundation for more intensive behaviors that constitute bullying behaviors. Proper measurement of bystander experiences will need to match student perceptions of bullying, especially if these definitions vary from empirical specifications.

Primary behaviors enacted by bystanders included passive avoidance, victim support, or bully support. These roles all coincide with research from Salmivalli and colleagues, suggesting that a bystander can support either the victim or bully, or they can remain passive (Salmivalli et al., 1996). A key bystander behavior mentioned in previous research that was noticeably absent from these participants was involving a teacher. This fits with research suggesting as bystanders age, they are less likely to seek adult intervention either because teachers have been unhelpful in the past, or for developmentally appropriate wishes to remain autonomous (Bradshaw et al., 2007; deLara, 2012).

In terms of bystander motivations, participant narratives suggest four different potential motivators. The majority of motivating factors discussed were consistent with previous bystander research including, bystander fear (deLara, 2012; Thornberg, 2007; Thornberg et al., 2012), relationships (Ettekal, Kochenderfer-Ladd, & Ladd, 2015; Evans & Smokowski, 2015; Oh & Hazler, 2009; Patterson, Allan, & Cross, 2015; Pozzoli & Gini, 2012; Thornberg, 2007), and previous experience with bullying (Crick & Dodge, 1996; Oh & Hazler, 2009). Bystander's motivated by their personal characteristics such as the apathy or obliviousness described by participants are comparable to moral disengagement literature (Doramajin & Bukowski, 2015; Obermann, 2011) and the concept of bystander disassociation (Thornberg, 2007). Within

this literature, bystanders distance themselves from potential negative feelings associated with witnessing a bullying event in an effort to minimize or prevent emotional discomfort. This fits with participant narratives of bystanders seeming to not care or not notice the bullying.

Additionally, the current study suggests bystander motivations not previously noted by empirical evaluation, specifically education level and curiosity. Participant experiences suggest a bystander response to witnessed bullying might be altered by their educational experiences (e.g., advanced vs. general classes) or by general curiosity about the accuracy of a bully's statements. Recognizing all potential motivation to respond is a key element in understanding behavioral actions, therefore research must add consideration for motivations noted here to develop a comprehensive assessment of bystander behavior.

The final goal of this research was to document high school student's perceptions of sexual orientation and gender normative standards. Results here provided additional support for the literature base specific to the existence and salience of gender stereotypes (Alfieri, Ruble, & Higgins, 1996 1996; Fine, 2010; Prentice & Carranza, 2002). The majority of the gender expectations described fit within the empirical concepts of physical appearance criteria rather than physical sex-based characteristics (Westbrook & Schilt, 2013). This is the first study identified within the literature specifically documenting high school student's expectations for gender expression.

In terms of sexual orientation labels, results included eleven labels mentioned in total, with three labels used consistently by all participants (e.g., gay, lesbian, and

bisexual). Although some research argues current generations of adolescents are moving away from traditional terms like gay, lesbian, and bisexual (Savin-Williams, 2005b), results of this study are consistent with more recent research that historically used sexual orientation labels persist with current adolescents (Russell, Clarke, & Clary, 2009). Current results are unique in that the focus was on participant labels about other people, as opposed to their self-identities. Results specific to student normative expectations for sexual orientation are consistent with previous research suggesting a conflation of sexual orientation identity with perceived level of gender-conformity, including the use of the term “gay-dar” (Blashill & Powlishta, 2009; Rieger, Linsenmeier, Gygax, Garcia, & Bailey, 2010 Garcia, & Bailey, 2010; Shelp, 2003). Results of this study expand the literature on high school student normative beliefs, adding the idea that sexual orientation assumptions occurred based on observed romantic or sexual behaviors. Overall, future measures of bystander responses to bias-based bully must consider these stereotyped assumptions to ensure accurate representation of behaviors expected for gender non-conforming and non-heterosexual identities.

Limitations

Inherent in all research, some limitations to this study exist that future studies should consider. First, the sample was obtained via “snowball” sampling methods. This potentially limits the experiences of participants to a selective group of individuals. Another limitation for this study was in the recruitment methods required by some school districts, namely providing the questions to parents of potential participants. After recruitment efforts in the high school, several potential participants approached me

to return the consent packet. They stated that they did not want their parents to know they were in GSA or they did not feel comfortable with their parents knowing about this research. This was not reported to be a problem by community members recruited via flyers or from community organizations, even though they also received the questions as well. Providing questions before interviews is not reported to cause any bias in information (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A final limitation to this research is the underlying assumptions that LGBT individuals are seen as a socially marginalized group. Although 13 of the participants agreed that this is indeed the case, one participant stated that he did not think they are a group that experiences any sort of marginalization. It is possible that participant's within this study have had specific experiences with this social marginalization, resulting in a lack of reporting from individuals who might have different normative expectations.

Future Directions

Research

As stated previously, the primary directive of this research is to develop realistic vignettes as part of a quantitative bystander behavior measure. This measure will be used to develop a robust empirical understanding of bystander responses to bullying. Quantifying bystander behavior will facilitate stronger prevention and intervention efforts to reduce bullying in schools. It also seems imperative, based on participant experience, that cyber bullying receive particular attention, specifically in relations to how adult bystanders should respond. Student experience suggests a lot of ambiguity about adult bystander response, and additional considerations seems necessary.

Additionally, participants provided suggestions for additional information that could potentially add to the literature and to empirical understanding of bystander experiences. Although all participants were given the opportunity to suggest additional directions, only four provided suggestions. The first suggestion, made by one female participant, was to explicitly ask students about positive experiences they have had with bystander responses. She stated that

“[she] think[s] there’s a lot of negativity, but honestly there are a lot of really good people that do support and help. And I think telling about when they witness support would be just as powerful when they don’t have the support”.

As part of the consenting process, participants were told about the final goal of the research interviews (i.e., development of ways to reduce bias-based bullying in schools). Citing this as a reason, two male participants reported that they felt the research should include consideration for bystander and parent personal feelings about sexual orientation/gender identity issues. They both felt that this information is highly influential for bystander behaviors. Also with this research goal in mind, another female participant indicated that she felt schools are not doing enough in relation to bias-based bullying. For her, she thought that more efforts to create specialized programming in school explicitly including bias-based bullying is very needed. In her words,

“I just feel like schools and adults and students I guess should approach this type of bullying more. The type of bullying that’s being talked about is like bullying someone for their size, or their ethnicity. Nobody ever talks

about, I don't think I've ever been in the bullying class session that talks about this type of bullying.”

Practice

Based on the information provided throughout the interviews, the researcher has created a list of potential practice directions that might be beneficial within the school setting. The first suggestion is to include explicit instruction about bias-based bullying to students. As suggested in the research section, some participants felt that there is not enough information distribution about bias-based bullying in the schools. Additionally, participants felt like teachers are unprepared to handle the specifics of bias-based bullying. It may be beneficial for educational opportunities to be made available to school faculty and staff so that they are better able to respond confidently to bias-based bullying. A final practice suggestion is to develop safe places and clubs in schools for students apart of the LGBT+ community. The participant who identified herself as a lesbian stated, “[she] felt really safe there, even though sometimes I get stereotyped at school. It is just, I can talk to people about what is going on, and they completely understand what I’m going through.” Creating safe spaces in the school might mean all the difference for an LGBT+ student who is struggling with acceptance.

REFERENCES

- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Process*, 50, 179-211.
- Ajzen, I. (2002). *Constructing a TpB questionnaire: Conceptual and methodological considerations*.
http://chuang.epage.au.edu.tw/ezfiles/168/1168/attach/20/pta_41176_7688352_57138.pdf.
- Alfieri, T., Ruble, D. N., & Higgins, E. T. (1996). Gender stereotypes during adolescence: Developmental changes and the transition to junior high school. *Developmental Psychology*, 32(6), 1129-1137.
- American Psychological Association. (2012). Guidelines for psychological practice with lesbian, gay, and bisexual clients. *The American Psychologist*, 67(1), 10-42. doi: 10.1037/a0024659
- Anagnostopoulos, D., Buchanan, N. T., Pereira, C., & Lichty, L. F. (2008). School staff responses to gender-based bullying as moral interpretation: An exploratory study. *Educational Policy*, 23(4), 519-553. doi: 10.1177/0895904807312469
- Bailey, J. M., Dunne, M. P., & Martin, N. G. (2000). Genetic and environmental influences on sexual orientation and its correlates in an Australian twin sample. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 78(3), 524-536. doi: 10.1037//0022-3514.78.3.524

- Bailey, J. M., & Zucker, K. J. (1995). Childhood sex-typed behavior and sexual orientation: A conceptual analysis and quantitative review. *Developmental Psychology, 31*(1), 43-55.
- Banaji, M. R., & Greenwald, A. G. (1995). Implicit gender stereotyping in judgments of fame. *Attitudes and Social Cognition, 68*(2), 181-198.
- Banks, C. S., Blake, J. J., & Joslin, A. K. (2013). Stand up or stay out of it: How do parents teach their children to respond in bullying situations? *The School Psychologist, 67*(3), 10-15.
- Barhight, L. R., Hubbard, J. A., & Hyde, C. T. (2013). Children's physiological and emotional reactions to witnessing bullying predict bystander intervention. *Child Development, 84*(1), 375-390. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8624.2012.01839.x
- Bem, D. J. (1996). Exotic becomes erotic: A developmental theory of sexual orientation. *Psychological Review, 103*(2), 320-335.
- Birkett, M., Espelage, D. L., & Koenig, B. (2009). LGB and questioning students in schools: the moderating effects of homophobic bullying and school climate on negative outcomes. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 38*(7), 989-1000. doi: 10.1007/s10964-008-9389-1
- Blake, J. J., Hughes, J., Williams, A. J., & Stephenson, M. (2014). *The BSCAM: A social information processing measure to assess bystander responses to bullying*. Manuscript under development.

- Blashill, A. J., & Powlishta, K. K. (2009). Gay Stereotypes: The Use of Sexual Orientation as a Cue for Gender-Related Attributes. *Sex Roles, 61*(11-12), 783-793. doi: 10.1007/s11199-009-9684-7
- Bradshaw, C. P., Sawyer, A. L., & O'Brennan, L. M. (2007). Bullying and peer victimization at school: Perceptual differences between students and school staff. *School Psychology Review, 36*(3), 361-382.
- Brody, H., & Clark, M. (2014). Narrative ethics: A narrative. *Narrative Ethics: The Role of Stories in Bioethics, 44*(1), S7-S12. doi: 10.1002/hast.261
- Brunstein Klomek, A., Marrocco, F., Kleinman, M., Schonfeld, I. S., & Gould, M. S. (2007). Bullying, depression, and suicidality in adolescents. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 46*(1), 40-49. doi: 10.1097/01.chi.0000242237.84925.18
- Burns, S., Maycock, B., Cross, D., & Brown, G. (2008). The power of peers: why some students bully others to conform. *Qualitative Health Research, 18*(12), 1704-1716. doi: 10.1177/1049732308325865
- Burton, C. M., Marshal, M. P., Chisolm, D. J., Sucato, G. S., & Friedman, M. S. (2013). Sexual minority-related victimization as a mediator of mental health disparities in sexual minority youth: a longitudinal analysis. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 42*(3), 394-402. doi: 10.1007/s10964-012-9901-5
- Bussey, K., & Bandura, A. (1999). Social cognitive theory of gender development and differentiation. *Psychological Review, 106*(4), 676-713.

- Butler, J. (1990). *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Butler, J. (2004). *Undoing Gender*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Cass, V. C. (1979). Homosexual identity formation: A theoretical model. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 4(3), 219-235.
- Chase, S. E. (2007). Narrative inquiry: Multiple lenses, approaches, voices. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 651-679). Ann Arbor, MI: Sage Publications.
- Coolidge, F. L., Thede, L. L., & Young, S. E. (2002). The heritability of gender identity disorder in a child and adolescent twin sample. *Behavior Genetics*, 32(4), 251-257.
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of Qualitative Research* (3 ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, INC.
- Craig, S. L., & McInroy, L. (2014). You can form a part of yourself online: The influence of new media on identity development and coming out for LGBTQ youth. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health*, 18(1), 95-109. doi: 10.1080/19359705.2013.777007
- Creswell, J. W. (2006). *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications INC.
- Crick, N. R., & Dodge, K. A. (1994). A review and reformulation of the social information-processing mechanisms in children's social adjustment. *Psychological Bulletin*, 115(1), 74-101.

- Crick, N. R., & Dodge, K. A. (1996). Social information-processing mechanisms in reactive and proactive aggression. *Child Development*, 67(3), 993-1002.
- Crossley, M. (2007). Narrative Analysis. In E. Lyons & A. Coyle (Eds.), *Analysing Qualitative Data in Psychology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Cullen, C., & Barnes-Holmes, D. (2008). Implicit pride and prejudice: A heterosexual phenomenon. In M. A. Morrison & T. G. Morrison (Eds.), *The Psychology of Modern Prejudice*. Hauppauge, NY: Nova Science Publishers, INC.
- Cunningham, G. & Melton, E. N. (2014). Varying degrees of support: Understanding parents' positive attitudes towards LGBT coaches. *Journal of Sport Management*, 28, 387-398.
- D'Augelli, A. (1994). Identity development and sexual orientation: Toward a model of lesbian, gay, and bisexual development. In E. J. Trickett, R. J. Watts & D. Birman (Eds.), *Human Diversity: Perspectives on People in Context* (pp. 312-333). Michigan: Jossey-Bass.
- D'Augelli, A. (2005). Developmental and contextual factors and mental health among lesbian, gay, and bisexual youths. In A. E. Omoto & H. M. Kurtzman (Eds.), *Sexual Orientation and Mental Health: Examining Identity and Development in Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual People* (pp. 37-53). Washington, DC: The American Psychological Association.
- Dasgupta, N. (2004). Implicit ingroup favoritism, outgroup favoritism, and their behavioral manifestations. *Social Justice Research*, 17(2), 143-169.

- Dasgupta, N., Desteno, D., Williams, L. A., & Hunsinger, M. (2009). Fanning the flames of prejudice: the influence of specific incidental emotions on implicit prejudice. *Emotion, 9*(4), 585-591. doi: 10.1037/a0015961
- deLara, E. W. (2012). Why adolescents don't disclose incidents of bullying and harassment. *Journal of School Violence, 11*(4), 288-305. doi: 10.1080/15388220.2012.705931
- Delgado, R. (1989). Storytelling for oppositionists and others: A plea for narrative. *Michigan Law Review, 87*(8), 2411-2441.
- Devine, P. G. (1989). Stereotypes and prejudice: Their automatic and controlled components. *Attitudes and Social Cognition, 56*(1), 5-18.
- Dey, I. (1993). *Qualitative data analysis: A user friendly guide for social scientists*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Diamond, M. (2002). Sex and gender are different: Sexual identity and gender identity are different. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 7*(3), 320-334. doi: 10.1177/1359104502007003002
- Dijkstra, J. K., Lindenberg, S., & Veenstra, R. (2008). Beyond the class norm: Bullying behavior of popular adolescents and its relation to peer acceptance and rejection. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology, 36*(8), 1289-1299. doi: 10.1007/s10802-008-9251-7
- Dodge, K. A., & Crick, N. R. (1990). Social information-processing bases of aggressive behavior in children. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 16*(1), 8-22. doi: 10.1177/0146167290161002

- Doramajin, C., & Bukowski, W. M. (2015). A longitudinal study of the associations between moral disengagement and active defneding versus passive bystanding during bullying situations. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, 61(1), 144-172.
- Egan, S. K., & Perry, D. G. (2001). Gender identity: A multidimensional analysis with implications for psychosocial adjustment. *Developmental Psychology*, 37(4), 451-463. doi: 10.1037//0012-i649.37.4.45i
- Eliot, M., Cornell, D., Gregory, A., & Fan, X. (2010). Supportive school climate and student willingness to seek help for bullying and threats of violence. *Journal of School Psychology*, 48, 533-553.
- Ely, R. J. (1995). The power in demography: Women's social constructions of gender identity at work. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 38(3), 589-634.
- Espelage, D. L., & Swearer Napolitano, S. M. (2008). Addressing research gaps in the intersection between homophobia and bullying. *School Psychology Review*, 37(2), 155-159.
- Ettekal, I., Kochenderfer-Ladd, B., & Ladd, G. W. (2015). A synthesis of person- and relational-level factors that influence bullying and bystanding behaviors: Toward an integrative framework. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 23, 75-86. doi: 10.1016/j.avb.2015.05.011
- Evans, C. B., & Chapman, M. V. (2014). Bullied youth: the impact of bullying through lesbian, gay, and bisexual name calling. *Am J Orthopsychiatry*, 84(6), 644-652. doi: 10.1037/ort0000031

- Evans, C. B., & Smokowski, P. R. (2015). Prosocial Bystander Behavior in Bullying Dynamics: Assessing the Impact of Social Capital. *J Youth Adolesc*, 44(12), 2289-2307. doi: 10.1007/s10964-015-0338-5
- Fedewa, A. L., & Ahn, S. (2011). The effects of bullying and peer victimization on sexual-minority and heterosexual youths: A quantitative meta-analysis of the literature. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*, 7(4), 398-418. doi: 10.1080/1550428x.2011.592968
- Fine, C. (2010). *Delusions of gender: The real science behind sex differences*. London, England: Icon Books, Ltd.
- Frank, A. (2002). Why study people's stories? The dialogical ethics of narrative analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 1(1).
- Freis, S. D., & Gurung, R. A. R. (2013). A Facebook analysis of helping behavior in online bullying. *Psychology of Popular Media Culture*, 2(1), 11-19. doi: 10.1037/a0030239
- Fyfe, B. (1983). "Homophobia" or homosexual bias reconsidered. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 12(6), 549-554.
- Gates, G. J. (2010). Sexual minorities in the 2008 general social survey: Coming out and demographic characteristics. UCLA School of Law: The Williams Institute.
- Gendron, B. P., Williams, K. R., & Guerra, N. C. (2011). An analysis of bullying among students within schools: Estimating the effects of individual normative beliefs, self-esteem, and school climate. *Journal of School Violence*, 10, 150-164.

- Gini, G., Albiero, P., Benelli, B., & Altoe, G. (2008). Determinants of adolescents' active defending and passive bystanding behavior in bullying. *Journal of Adolescence*, 31(1), 93-105. doi: 10.1016/j.adolescence.2007.05.002
- Gini, G., & Pozzoli, T. (2009). Association between bullying and psychosomatic problems: A meta-analysis. *Pediatrics*, 123(3), 1059-1065. doi: 10.1542/peds.2008-1215
- Gini, G., & Pozzoli, T. (2013). Bullied children and psychosomatic problems: A meta-analysis. *Pediatrics*, 132, 720-729.
- Gini, G., Pozzoli, T., Borghi, F., & Franzoni, L. (2008). The role of bystanders in students' perception of bullying and sense of safety. *Journal of School Psychology*, 46(6), 617-638. doi: 10.1016/j.jsp.2008.02.001
- Gladden, R. M., Vivolo-Kantor, A., Hamburger, M. E., & Lumpkin, C. D. (2014). *Bullying surveillance among youths: Uniform definitions for public health and recommended data elements*. Atlanta, GA.
- Goldner, V. (1991). Toward a critical relational theory of gender. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 1(3), 249-272.
- Greenwald, A. G., & Banaji, M. R. (1995). Implicit social cognition: Attitudes, self-esteem, and stereotypes. *Psychological Review*, 102(1), 4-27.
- Herek, G. M. (1991). Stigma, prejudice, and violence against lesbians and gay men. In J. C. Gonsiorek & J. D. Weinrich (Eds.), *Homosexuality: Research Implications for Public Policy* (pp. 60-80). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

- Herek, G. M. (2000). The Psychology of Sexual Prejudice. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 9(1), 19-22. doi: 10.1111/1467-8721.00051
- Herek, G. M. (2009). Sexual stigma and sexual prejudice in the United States: A conceptual framework. In D. A. Hope (Ed.), *Contemporary Perspectives on Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Identities* (Vol. 54, pp. 65-112). New York, NY: Springer.
- Horn, S. S. (2006). Adolescents' acceptance of same-sex peers based on sexual orientation and gender expression. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 36(3), 363-371. doi: 10.1007/s10964-006-9111-0
- Hudson, W. W., & Ricketts, W. A. (1980). A strategy for the measurement of homophobia. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 5(4), 357-372.
- Imperato-McGinley, J., Peterson, R. E., Gautier, T., & Sturla, E. (1979). Androgens and the evolution of male-gender identity among male pseudohermaphrodites with 5 α -reductase deficiency. *Journal of Medicine*, 300(22), 1233-1237.
- Jagose, A. (1996). *Queer Theory: An Introduction*. New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Jellison, W. A., McConnell, A. R., & Gabriel, S. (2004). Implicit and explicit measures of sexual orientation attitudes: in group preferences and related behaviors and beliefs among gay and straight men. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 30(5), 629-642. doi: 10.1177/0146167203262076
- Johnson, C., Heath, M. A., Bailey, B. M., Coyne, S. M., Yamawaki, N., & Eggett, D. L. (2013). Adolescents' Perceptions of Male Involvement in Relational Aggression:

- Age and Gender Differences. *Journal of School Violence*, 12(4), 357-377. doi: 10.1080/15388220.2013.819557
- Jolls, C., & Sunstein, C. R. (2006). The law of implicit bias. *California Law Review*, 94(4), 969-996.
- Jones, S. R., Torres, V., & Arminio, J. (2014). *Negotiating the Complexities of Qualitative Research in Higher Education*, 2nd edition. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.
- Josselson, R., & Lieblich, A. (1999). *Making Meaning of Narratives* (Vol. 6). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Jost, J. T., Rudman, L. A., Blair, I. V., Carney, D. R., Dasgupta, N., Glaser, J., & Hardin, C. D. (2009). The existence of implicit bias is beyond reasonable doubt: A refutation of ideological and methodological objections and executive summary of ten studies that no manager should ignore. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 29, 39-69. doi: 10.1016/j.riob.2009.10.001
- Karna, A., Voeten, M., Poskiparta, E., & Salmivalli, C. (2010). Vulnerable children in varying classroom contexts. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, 56(3), 261-282.
- Kate, M. R., & Deaux, K. (1987). Gender belief systems: Homosexuality and the implicit inversion theory. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 11, 83-96.
- Kitzinger, C. (2005). Heteronormativity in action: Reproducing the heterosexual nuclear family in after-hours medical calls. *Social Problems*, 52(4), 477-498.
- Kosciw, J. G., Greytak, E. A., Bartkiewicz, M. J., Boesen, M. J., & Palmer, N. A. (2011). The 2011 national school climate survey: The experiences of lesbian,

- gay, bisexual, and transgender youth in our nation's schools. New York, NY: GLSEN.
- Kosciw, J. G., Greytak, E. A., Palmer, N. A., & Boesen, M. J. (2014). The 2013 National School Climate Survey: The experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth in our nation's schools. New York: GLSEN.
- Krefting, L. (1991). Rigor in qualitative research: The assessment of trustworthiness. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 45(3).
- Latané, B., & Darley, J. M. (1970). *The unresponsive bystander: Why doesn't he help?* New York, NY: Meredith Corporation.
- Leaper, C. (2013). Gender Development during childhood. In P. D. Zelazo (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Developmental Psychology* (Vol. 2, pp. 326-377). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Lee, C. (2008). The gay panic defense. *GW Law Faculty Publications & Other Works*.
- Lemerise, E. A., & Arsenio, W. F. (2000). An integrated model of emotion processes and cognition in social information processing. *Child Development*, 71(1), 107-118.
- LeVay, S. (1993). *The sexual brain*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Inc.
- Lombardi, E. L., Wilchins, R. A., Priesing, D., & Malouf, D. (2002). Gender Violence. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 42(1), 89-101. doi: 10.1300/J082v42n01_05

- Mahaffey, A. L., Bryan, A., & Hutchison, K. E. (2005). Sex differences in affective responses to homoerotic stimuli: evidence for an unconscious bias among heterosexual men, but not heterosexual women. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 34(5), 537-545. doi: 10.1007/s10508-005-6279-4
- Mahan, W. C., Varjas, K., Dew, B. J., Meyers, J., Singh, A. A., Marshall, M. L., & Graybill, E. C. (2006). School and community service providers' perspectives on gay, lesbian and questioning bullying. *Journal of LGBT Issues in Counseling*, 1(2), 45-66. doi: 10.1300/J462v01n02_04
- Martin, C. L., & Ruble, D. N. (2010). Patterns of gender development. *Annu Rev Psychol*, 61, 353-381. doi: 10.1146/annurev.psych.093008.100511
- Martin, C. L., Ruble, D. N., & Szkrybalo, J. (2002). Cognitive theories of early gender development. *Psychological Bulletin*, 128(6), 903-933. doi: 10.1037//0033-2909.128.6.903
- McCabe, P. C., Dragowski, E. A., & Robinson, F. (2013). What Is homophobic bias anyway? Defining and recognizing microaggressions and harassment of LGBTQ youth. *Journal of School Violence*, 12(1), 7-26. doi: 10.1080/15388220.2012.731664
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publication Inc.
- Mustanski, B. S., Chivers, M. L., & Bailey, J. M. (2002). A critical review of recent biological research on human sexual orientation. *Annual Review of Sex Research*, 13(1), 89-140.

- Nadal, K. L. (2013). *That's so gay: Microaggressions and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Nadal, K. L., & Griffin, K. E. (2011). Microaggressions: A root of bullying, violence, and victimization toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youths. In M. A. Paludi (Ed.), *The psychology of teen violence and victimization*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.
- Nadal, K. L., Issa, M., Leon, J., Meterko, V., Wideman, M., & Wong, Y. (2011). Sexual Orientation Microaggressions: "Death by a Thousand Cuts" for Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Youth. *Journal of LGBT Youth*, 8(3), 234-259. doi: 10.1080/19361653.2011.584204
- National Association of School Psychologists. (2011). Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth (Position Statement). Bethesda, MD: Author.
- Nickerson, A. B., Mele, D., & Princiotta, D. (2008). Attachment and empathy as predictors of roles as defenders or outsiders in bullying interactions. *Journal of School Psychology*, 46(6), 687-703. doi: 10.1016/j.jsp.2008.06.002
- O'Brien, C. (2011). Young people's comparisons of cross-gender and same-gender bullying in British secondary schools. *Educational Research*, 53(3), 257-301. doi: 10.1080/00131881.2011.598658
- O'Connell, P., Peper, D., & Craig, W. (1999). Peer involvement in bullying: Insights and challenges for intervention. *Journal of Adolescence*, 22, 431-452.

- O'Malley Olsen, E., Kann, L., Vivolo-Kantor, A., Kinchen, S., & McManus, T. (2014). School violence and bullying among sexual minority high school students, 2009-2011. *Journal of Adolescent Health*. doi: 10.1016/j.jadohealth.2014.03.002
- Obermann, M.-L. (2011). Moral disengagement among bystanders to school bullying. *Journal of School Violence*, 10(3), 239-257. doi: 10.1080/15388220.2011.578276
- Oh, I., & Hazler, R. J. (2009). Contributions of personal and situational factors to bystander's reactions to school bullying. *School Psychology International*, 30(3), 291-210. doi: 10.1177/0143034309106499
- Oleson, V. L. (2011). Feminist qualitative research in the millenium's first decade: Developments, challenges, prospects. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications INC.
- Olweus, D. (1993). *Bullying at School*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.
- Olweus, D. (2013). School bullying: Development and some important challenges. *Annual review of clinical psychology*, 9, 751-780. doi: 10.1146/annurev-clinpsy-050212-185516
- Olweus, D. (2014). Plight of victims of school bullying: The opposite of well-being. *Handbook of child well-being: Theories, methods, and policies in global perspective*, 5, 2593-2616.
- Ollerenshaw, J. A., & Creswell, J. W. (2002). Narrative research: A comparison of two restorying data analysis approaches. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 8(3), 329-347. doi: 10.1177/10778004008003008

- Patterson, L. J., Allan, A., & Cross, D. (2015). Adolescent perceptions of bystanders' responses to cyberbullying. *New Media & Society*. doi: 10.1177/1461444815606369
- Paul, J. J., & Cillessen, A. H. N. (2003). Dynamics of peer victimization in early adolescence. *Journal of Applied School Psychology, 19*(2), 25-43. doi: 10.1300/J008v19n02_03
- Pauletti, R. E., Cooper, P. J., & Perry, D. G. (2014). Influences of gender identity on children's maltreatment of gender-nonconforming peers: A person x target analysis of aggression. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 106*(5), 843-866. doi: 10.1037/a0036037
- Peplau, L. A., Garnets, L. D., Spalding, L. R., Conley, T. D., & Veniegas, R. C. (1998). A critique of Bem's "Exotic Becomes Erotic" theory of sexual orientation. *Psychological Review, 105*(2), 387-394.
- Peplau, L. A., & Huppin, M. (2008). Masculinity, femininity and the development of sexual orientation in women. *The Haworth Press, 145-165*. doi: 10.1300/J529v12n01_09
- Postigo, S., González, R., Mateu, C., & Montoya, I. (2012). Predicting bullying: Maladjustment, social skills and popularity. *Educational Psychology, 32*(5), 627-639. doi: 10.1080/01443410.2012.680881
- Potter, S. J., Fountain, K., & Stapleton, J. G. (2012). Addressing sexual and relationship violence in the LGBT community using a bystander framework. *Harvard Review of Psychiatry, 20*(4), 201-208. doi: 10.3109/10673229.2012.712838

- Pozzoli, T., & Gini, G. (2012). Why Do Bystanders of Bullying Help or Not? A Multidimensional Model. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, 33(3), 315-340. doi: 10.1177/0272431612440172
- Prentice, D. A., & Carranza, E. (2002). What women and men should be, shouldn't be, are allowed to be, and don't have to be: The contents of prescriptive gender stereotypes. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 26, 269-281.
- Pronk, J., Goossens, F. A., Olthof, T., De Mey, L., & Willemen, A. M. (2013). Children's intervention strategies in situations of victimization by bullying: Social cognitions of outsiders versus defenders. *Journal of School Psychology*, 51(6), 669-682. doi: 10.1016/j.jsp.2013.09.002
- Reissman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication Inc.
- Rieger, G., Linsenmeier, J. A., Gygax, L., Garcia, S., & Bailey, J. M. (2010). Dissecting "gaydar": accuracy and the role of masculinity-femininity. *Arch Sex Behav*, 39(1), 124-140. doi: 10.1007/s10508-008-9405-2
- Rigby, K., & Johnson, B. (2006). Expressed readiness of Australian schoolchildren to act as bystanders in support of children who are being bullied. *Educational Psychology*, 26(3), 425-440. doi: 10.1080/01443410500342047
- Rivers, I. (2011). *Homophobic Bullying: Research and Theoretical Perspective*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

- Rivers, I., Poteat, V. P., Noret, N., & Ashurst, N. (2009). Observing bullying at school: The mental health implications of witness status. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 24(4), 211-223. doi: 10.1037/a0018164
- Robers, S., Zhang, A., Morgan, R. E., & Musu-Gillette, L. (2015). *Indicators of school crime and safety: 2014*. Washington, DC: Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov>.
- Rock, P. F., & Baird, J. A. (2011). Tell the teacher or tell the bully off: Children's strategy production for bystanders to bullying. *Social Development*, 1-11. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9507.2011.00627.x
- Rosario, M., Schrimshaw, E. W., Hunter, J., & Braun, L. (2006). Sexual identity development among lesbian, gay, and bisexual youths: Consistency and change over time. *The Journal of Sex Research*, 43(1), 46-58.
- Russell, S. T., Clarke, T. J., & Clary, J. (2009). Are teens "post-gay"? Contemporary adolescents' sexual identity labels. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 38(7), 884-890. doi: 10.1007/s10964-008-9388-2
- Russell, S. T., Toomey, R. B., Ryan, C., & Diaz, R. M. (2014). Being out at school: The implications for school victimization and young adult adjustment. *Am J Orthopsychiatry*, 84(6), 635-643. doi: 10.1037/ort0000037
- Ryan, C., & Rivers, I. (2003). Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth: Victimization and its correlates in the USA and UK. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 5(2), 103-119. doi: 10.1080/1369105011000012883
- Saldaña, J. (2013). *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* (Vol. 2). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications INC.

- Salmivalli, C. (1999). Participant role approach to school bullying: Implications for interventions. *Journal of Adolescence*, 22, 453-459.
- Salmivalli, C. (2010). Bullying and the peer group: A review. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 15(2), 112-120. doi: 10.1016/j.avb.2009.08.007
- Salmivalli, C., Lagerspetz, K., Bjorkqvist, K., Osterman, K., & Kaukiainen, A. (1996). Bullying as a group process: Participant roles in their relations to social status within the group. *Aggressive Behavior*, 22, 1-15.
- Salmivalli, C., Lappalainen, M., & Lagerspetz, K. M. J. (1998). Stability and change in behavior in connection with bullying in schools: A two-year follow-up. *Aggressive Behavior*, 24, 205-218.
- Salmivalli, C., Voeten, M., & Poskiparta, E. (2011). Bystanders matter: Associations between reinforcing, defending, and the frequency of bullying behavior in classrooms. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, 40(5), 668-676. doi: 10.1080/15374416.2011.597090
- Samuels, E. (2003). My body, my closet: Invisible disability and the limits of coming-out disclosure. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, 9(1-2), 233-255.
- Savin-Williams, R. C. (2001). A critique of research on sexual-minority youths. *Journal of Adolescence*, 24(1), 5-13. doi: 10.1006/jado.2000.0369
- Savin-Williams, R. C. (2005a). *The New Gay Teen*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Savin-Williams, R. C. (2005b). The new gay teen: Shunning labels. *The Gay & Lesbian Review*, November-December.

- Schmader, T. (2002). Gender identification moderates stereotype threat effects on women's math performance. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 38(2), 194-201. doi: 10.1006/jesp.2001.1500
- Sexual Minority Research Assessment Team. (2009). Best practices for asking questions about sexual orientation on surveys: The Williams Institute.
- Shelp, S. G. (2003). Gaydar. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 44(1), 1-14. doi: 10.1300/J082v44n01_01
- Sherif, C. W. (1982). Needed concepts in the study of gender identity. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 6(4), 375-398.
- Skidmore, W. C., Linsenmeier, J. A., & Bailey, J. M. (2006). Gender nonconformity and psychological distress in lesbians and gay men. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 35(6), 685-697. doi: 10.1007/s10508-006-9108-5
- Snell, R. L. (1997). Defining and measuring sexual orientation: A review. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 36(6), 643-658.
- Steffens, M. C. (2005). Implicit and explicit attitudes towards lesbians and gay men. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 49(2), 39-66.
- Storms, M. D. (1980). Theories of sexual orientation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 38(5), 783-792.
- Sullivan, N. (2003). *A Critical Introduction to Queer Theory*. Washington Square, NY: New York University Press.

- Tenenbaum, H. R., & Leaper, C. (2002). Are parents' gender schemas related to their children's gender-related cognitions? A meta-analysis. *Developmental Psychology*, 38(4), 615-630. doi: 10.1037//0012-1649.38.4.615
- Thornberg, R. (2007). A classmate in distress: Schoolchildren as bystanders and their reasons for how they act. *Social Psychology of Education*, 10(1), 5-28. doi: 10.1007/s11218-006-9009-4
- Thornberg, R., & Knutsen, S. (2010). Teenagers' explanations of bullying. *Child & Youth Care Forum*, 40(3), 177-192. doi: 10.1007/s10566-010-9129-z
- Thornberg, R., Tenenbaum, L., Varjas, K., Meyers, J., Jungert, T., & Vanegas, G. (2012). Bystander motivation in bullying incidents: To intervene or not to intervene. *Original Research*, XIII(3), 247-252.
- Toomey, R. B., Card, N. A., & Casper, D. M. (2014). Peers' perceptions of gender nonconformity: Associations with overt and relational peer victimization and aggression in early adolescence. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, 34(4), 463-485. doi: 10.1177/0272431613495446
- Toomey, R. B., McGuire, J. K., & Russell, S. T. (2012). Heteronormativity, school climates, and perceived safety for gender nonconforming peers. *Journal of Adolescence*, 35(1), 187-196. doi: 10.1016/j.adolescence.2011.03.001
- Trach, J., Hymel, S., Waterhouse, T., & Neale, K. (2010). Bystander responses to school bullying: A cross-sectional investigation of grade and sex differences. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology*, 25(1), 114-130. doi: 10.1177/0829573509357553

- Troiden, R. R. (1988). Homosexual identity development. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 9, 105-113.
- Turner, W. B. (2000). *A Genealogy of Queer Theory*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Tyson, P. (1982). A developmental line of gender identity, gender role, and choice of love object. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 30(1), 61-86.
doi: 10.1177/000306518203000103
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2013). Effects of Bullying. Retrieved January, 2014, from <http://www.stopbullying.gov/at-risk/effects/index.html>
- Unger, R. K. (1979). Toward a redefinition of sex and gender. *American Psychologist*, 34(11), 1085-1094.
- Varjas, K., Dew, B., Marshal, M. P., Graybill, E., Singh, A., Meyers, J., & Birckbichler, L. (2008). Bullying in schools towards sexual minority youth. *Journal of School Violence*, 7(2), 59-86. doi: 10.1300/J202v07n02
- Varjas, K., Graybill, E., Mahan, W., Meyers, J., Dew, B., Marshall, M., . . . Birckbichler, L. (2004). Urban service providers' perspectives on school responses to gay, lesbian, and questioning students: An exploratory study. *Professional School Counseling*, 11(2), 113-119.
- Varjas, K., Mahan, W. C., Meyers, J., Birckbichler, L., Lopp, G., & Dew, B. J. (2006). Assessing school climate among sexual minority high school students. *Journal of LGBT Issues in Counseling*, 1(3), 49-75. doi: 10.1300/J462v01n03_05

- Wernick, L. J., Kulick, A., & Inglehart, M. H. (2013). Factors predicting student intervention when witnessing anti-LGBTQ harassment: The influence of peers, teachers, and climate. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 35(2), 296-301. doi: 10.1016/j.chilyouth.2012.11.003
- Westbrook, L., & Schilt, K. (2013). Doing gender, determining gender: Transgender people, gender panics, and the maintenance of the sex/gender/sexuality system. *Gender & Society*, 28(1), 32-57. doi: 10.1177/0891243213503203

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW TEMPLATE

Age: _____ Grade: _____
Ethnicity/Race: _____ Gender Identity: _____

For all questions be sure to get- WHO was there, WHERE they were, WHAT did everyone do, WHY did everyone behave the way they behaved, WHAT could have made a difference in changing the situation (if the situation is seen as bad),

- Tell me a little bit about yourself. *(Aim to understand what personal characteristics are important to that individual.)*
 - Now, tell me a little bit about your closest friends *(aim to understand the student's support network and key members)*
- How do you define bullying?
 - How do people at school talk about bullying (i.e., friends, teachers, administration)?
 - What are their expectations for what to do if you see bullying?
 - *If the student only names 1 type of bullying:* are there other things that might be involved in bullying?
- What have you been told about what being a male means? Female?
 - What have you been told that men should look like (i.e., how they dress, talk, behave, etc.)? Female?
 - Tell me how you feel about those expectations.
- With those expectations of gender in mind, have you ever seen anyone bullied for not meeting those expectations? Tell me a story about a time someone was bullied for their gender
 - How did you know they were being bullied for their gender?
 - How did watching that make you feel?
 - How did you respond?
 - What made you decide to respond that way?
 - Was there anything you wish you could change about your response?
 - How did others respond? Why do you think they did that?
- Besides someone telling you, how do you know what another person's sexual orientation is?
 - What labels do you use to describe different sexual orientations?
 - What labels do you hear other people use?
 - What expectations have you been told about how a non-heterosexual person should appear (i.e., how they dress, behave, talk, etc.)?

- With those expectations of sexual orientation in mind, have you ever seen anyone (*student's word for bullying*) for not meeting expectations? Tell me a story about a time you've seen someone bullied for their sexual orientation.
 - How did you know they were *being bullied* for their sexual orientation?
 - How did watching that make you feel?
 - How did you respond?
 - What made you decide to respond that way?
 - Was there anything you wish you could change about your response?
 - How did others respond? Why do you think they did that?
- Is there anything that I have not asked in our time together that you think I should ask someone in the future?